

# ELEMENTARY ENGLISH



# Elementary ENGLISH

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# ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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OCTOBER, 1951

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## A Time for Fundamentals

PAUL FARMER<sup>1</sup>

The word *fundamental* connotes something that appeals to each of us. We like its sense of depth and firmness—its bedrock quality, the surest of foundations. When we are confused and doubtful, when the complexities of life seem almost beyond solution, we need to steady ourselves by looking at the fundamentals involved and weighing them against that which is merely expedient or fortuitous.

As individuals, as a professional group, and as a nation, we feel this need today. Some force, centrifugal in tendency, pulls us toward wider and wider relationships. The prospect of losing our identity is frightening. Man *versus* the machine, democracy *versus* totalitarianism, segmentation *versus* integration are among the varied aspects of this struggle. Now is the time for fundamentals.

Let us begin with the basic value, not only of American life, but of Western civilization itself—the dignity and worth of human personality. Here is the bedrock fundamental of our political, educational, and religious philosophy. *All men...*

*created equal...inalienable rights...life more abundant...education for all American youth* are ringing phrases in our philosophy. Inherent in each is the supreme importance of individual personality.

What implications for teachers of English lie in this basic value of American life? What have language, literature, the power of expression, the ability to think critically, the beauty and mystery of making ideas and ideals immortal with vibrant, living words to do with the development of human personality? What have we as teachers of English to offer human beings when all about us new knowledge is being developed so quickly, when wider relationships are constantly forced upon us, and when the differences of men and nations demand as never before effective communication for their proper understanding and conciliation?

As I write this communication, the eyes of the world look to the ruined city of Kaesong, where the first of the prelimi-

<sup>1</sup>President of the National Council of Teachers of English.

nary talks on a truce in the Korean War is being held. Among the three negotiators representing the United Nations, two are from the United States. This fact is somewhat symbolic of the responsibility which we as a people carry today. The hope of peace-loving people everywhere hinges upon how successfully the fundamental value of Western civilization can be projected into that conference, as well as subsequent conferences, and respected there.

Since this is a time for fundamentals, the Council, at the forthcoming annual meeting to be held in Cincinnati on November 22-24, will focus its thinking on English and human personality. From the perspective of the basic value in American and in Western civilization, let us examine, both realistically and imaginatively, the place of English in life today.

Paul Farmer  
President, N. C. T. E.

## Oh! An English Teacher?

HELEN RAND MILLER<sup>1</sup>

"Oh! you are an English teacher? I'll be afraid to open my mouth. Johnny, Miss Spike is an English teacher; you'd better be careful how you talk while she is here."

What have we done to deserve this attitude so often expressed? Do we turn a room or a home into a deep freeze as soon as we enter it?

Really we should be the very people everyone would like to see. We should be artists of sociability, creating an atmosphere in which the best conversation and other social arts flourish. If literature means anything to us, it should be so much a part of us that we would transmit the "gracious flexibility," sensitivity, insight, understanding, wit, humor and fun—the best that has been known, thought, felt and enjoyed throughout the ages. Literature is what people have learned about

how to live. If we knew how to listen, people would talk with ease and pleasure; they would see the best in each other. Everyone would speak better than he knew he could, and when he said goodbye, he would lift his shoulders and say to himself, "I guess I'm an interesting person." That would be our triumph.

The common attitude toward us cannot be brushed off as a joke. We are just the kind of people we don't want to be, and we destroy what we have dedicated our lives to promote. "Each man kills the thing he loves"; we do. We paralyze speech and with it the social spirit, and we frighten people so that they never know the creative pleasure of writing.

We teach reading, but we poison it. We talk about reading for growth and

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growth in reading, but we wither the roots of learning. A report to The American Book Publishers Council accuses us of strangling the production of serious books. *The New York Times* for April 29, 1951, under the heading, "Aversion to Books Traced to Schools," quoted from the report:

"To many people book reading is associated with schools and teachers," the report said. "Whatever emotions are aroused by memories of school are transferred to books. Thus book reading connotes the ordeal of examinations and the chore of compulsory assignment; it is not a symbol of pleasurable activity but of imposed discipline.

"The stereotype of the 'old-maid school teacher' carries a book in her hand, and all the undesirable characteristics of the image of the teacher are transferred to the image of the book reader. If the teacher is not considered to be a person worthy of emulation, then book reading—an activity typical of the teacher—is not likely to be looked upon as desirable."

The report said that "the man in the street" tended to look upon book reading as a "highbrow activity which smacks of devotion to the aristocratic way of life distasteful to his notions of democracy."

Why are we the kind of people we don't want to be? Why do we do the opposite of what we want to do? The contradiction in our lives and work has worried us all. If we can spot the cause of the contradiction, we can begin to apply positive remedies.

If we can see where we are on the roadmap of history, we can look at ourselves in perspective. America has grown

rapidly but unevenly. Industrially we have been at a great advantage because we started out fresh in a new country free from the impediments of feudalism that cramped Europe. We built fine schools—the best buildings in towns all over the country. We knew that in a democracy it is to the advantage of all to have all the children well educated. The education of each enriches the life of everyone.

But in our speed we neglected to do our own thinking. We let some old teachers, educated in the old world, say, "This is the way to act in a schoolroom." So we let them establish an imported feudal system inside our schools. It doesn't fit. That explains why we are misfits outside our schools; we can't be feudal masters all day and acceptable members of a democracy in the evening. Trying to live in two historic ages that are directly opposed to each other tears us up, wears us out, and makes us the kind of people we become. We'll have to change conditions to improve ourselves.

We not only dehumanize ourselves but we train children to live in a feudal system of society instead of a democracy. Year after year we keep them in rows of seats screwed to the floor. They can speak and move only with our permission. A good boy is a quiet boy. We make the rules; we give the pupils rules in books to follow. We are feudal masters of suppression.

If this diagnosis is right, we know what to do. The feudal system permeated every part of feudal life; we must make democracy work in every part of our life. Feudalism was deadening oppression from the top; democracy is growth upward.

Democracy is not merely a way of electing public officials; there is a democratic way of thinking that we must learn and a democratic way of talking with people on the basis of equality and mutual respect. We can lay out a pattern of feudalism and a pattern of democracy and notice that one is the reverse of the other. Feudalism is upside down or wrong side up for us. With these opposing patterns constantly before us, we can match all our thinking and planning. Where we find the feudal pattern, we must get rid of it. It is decaying refuse.

This applies to our whole educational system. We can see a few ways it applies to English teachers.

Feudal masters ruled by fear, fear of punishment for breaking laws. The thing to do was to avoid punishment. All was Right or Wrong according to the laws till the Final Judgment Day.

We use the medieval Right or Wrong pattern. We mark the mistakes on pupils' papers and say we are correcting them. Perfection or 100% is the avoidance of mistakes. In this system it is impossible to rise higher than the avoidance of mistakes that deviate from the rules in the book. That explains why we make so little progress in teaching people to write and why writing is a task from a taskmaster and not any fun.

It is true that students make mistakes. College freshmen and seventh graders make the same mistakes. How can we teach them not to make mistakes?

Not by fear, the psychologists tell us. Fear of making a mistake may be the cause of making that very mistake. Fear of

making mistakes lessens a person's confidence and also his ability. Fear is negative, destructive.

How can we teach children to express their ideas accurately? That is a challenge for pioneers. We haven't begun to find the way yet, but we can.

We know that we must shift from negative to positive. We have made lists of spelling demons. (The medieval devil pattern). We can have children make lists of words they will need to know how to spell. (The democratic way of learning for life use). A high school sophomore misspelled *losing*. He said, "I always get that wrong." (The medieval serf accepting defeat). The teacher asked him to write *lost* on the board. He could do that. (The pattern of building up from a sure foundation). Then she asked him to write *lose* and *losing* and to notice that all three words were alike in that each had only one *o*. She asked him whether thinking of the three words together would help him to remember how to spell *losing*, or whether he could think of a better way. She asked the class if anyone could suggest another way. (Not the medieval know-it-all law-giver method but the problem-solving method of democracy). The next day she said to him, "Good morning. How do you spell *losing*?" Several times later she asked him the same question. (Not the feudal pattern of wrong but the democratic way of concentrating on useful learning until it is ready for use).

A teacher wrote on a boy's paper, "You have invented a word. I wonder how long it will take it to get into the dictionary." After class when he joined a group in the hall she heard him say, "I

invented a word! Gee!" Of course he had the democratic right to invent a word. To have written on his paper, "No such word. See dictionary," would have been in the medieval pattern of bowing backward to an authority in the past instead of creating new life for a new world.

We have trained children to listen for mistakes and report them. Let's never do that again. They can hunt in books and everywhere else for the best combinations of simple words, the best ways of asking and answering questions in a grocery store, on the street, and anywhere else. They can look for the best ways of handling all kinds of social situations. Such exercises will help them to use language effectively and be the kind of social people they want to be.

A high school junior was doing poor work in all his classes. His written work was miserable. One day the teacher said to him, "Have you noticed that everyone listens when you talk? You have a rare and valuable social ability to encourage other people to talk. If you could learn to write as well as you talk, you might be a real writer." (The democratic pattern of respect for the individual, of seeing the best and building upon it).

The boy said, "No. I am a poor student. I always have been." (The attitude of a feudal serf).

The teacher said, "Let's try an experiment." (In the medieval pattern there was no experimenting, hence little progress; all was established and set). You try to write just the way you talk. Don't bother to copy your first draft. Don't even think about

sentence structure or spelling. I won't mark the mistakes on your papers because I think it has discouraged you to see the red marks. I will keep track of your work, and when I have to put a grade on your report card, it may not be high, but you and I will understand why I have not been marking mistakes."

A few months later he came in to see the teacher and said, "I just don't know it's me in this class. I feel like I'm as good as any of the others."

The teacher said, "Now all you need to do is to learn to spell and write sentences."

"Gosh, is that all?" he said. "I can do that." (He was free from the vague feudal fear that everything was wrong with him or something he couldn't understand or face).

"Yes," said the teacher, "but it will be hard. You have felt defeated learning in the old way, and so you'll have to think of a new way that you can teach yourself. You are smart enough to do it if you really put your mind on it." (Democratic self reliance and self respect pattern).

For ten years teachers had failed him. They said they failed him, meaning that it was because of his stupidity. It was they who failed and he who suffered. He went to college and in his junior and senior years made all A's and B's.

If people are going to live in a democracy, they must practice every moment of the school day. To clear the way and find a way we must

Wring out old feudal fear;  
Bring in the new democracy.

# Books Build America: The Englewood Pageant of Books

JOHN M. TROUT, JR.<sup>1</sup>

"A book fair? But my children don't read!"

Participating in the Englewood Pageant of Books was really a problem in 4 B. The children were collectively restless and bewildered. Attention was spasmodic. Results of reading tests were low. In fact, many of the group were becoming "clinical cases" for the system's Child Study Department. These were certainly no lovers of the printed page. How could they make use of Englewood's book fair?

The question was a challenge. 4B was strong in art and music, and especially in dancing. Thus in the social studies unit on Guatemala, *Children of the Highlands*, they found the essential rhythm and color. With the help of the Englewood Public Library and of the State Library Service. The teacher assembled fourteen books on Guatemala usable at the reading level of her pupils. The Guatemalan Consulate in New York supplied pictorial materials, and the supervisor of art furnished Guatemalan clothing and utensils. Friends made available recordings of Guatemalan folk dances, and taught the children to execute the steps. 4B became children of the highlands.

As such, in addition to learning Guatemalan dances, they designed costumes, using sheeting and crayon to make the serapes. The craftsmen among them made a model of a Guatemalan church, with

surrounding trees and costumed figures. Others in the group developed a play, wherein Mr. Cobb, a tourist, visits a Guatemalan fiesta to learn the history and customs of that land. Because this play was to be performed on their own school's program in the Pageant of Books, details had to be accurate. Consequently, they read the fourteen books, learned how to make use of what they had read, and to be pleased with reading. 4B proved that a book fair can be fun for those who don't read.

*Children of the Highlands* was one of over a hundred similar projects coordinated in the Englewood Pageant of Books, a series of programs directed to encourage children's interest in leisure-time reading. The genesis of the Pageant is a story in itself.

The idea that Englewood's public schools should conduct their own book show sprang from trips to the *Times* Book-fair in New York in November, 1950. The children returned appreciative, but not enthusiastic, for they had no sense of participation. As one principal stated: "These youngsters have everything 'canned' for them over radio, in films, on television. Unless they gain some 'doing' out of a program, it's a waste of time. Let THEM stage a book fair."

The idea of an Englewood book fair 'took'! The teachers of language arts, in-

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cluding representatives of all grades, had been seeking a single coordinated project, operative at all levels of the system, as a basis for development of the curriculum. They found that project in the Pageant of Books.

Convinced that Englewood's children were overdependent on 'spectator' entertainment, the teachers further conceived the Pageant as a reply to the challenge of radio, films, and television. These commercialized media, they held, were combating the child's reading interest and corroding his reading habits. They were generating 'language starvation'! The Pageant should vitalize reading experience, should make the child a participant.

To meet this demand for participation, Englewood's teachers organized the Pageant on three different levels. Basic was that of the classroom. Each group was to develop a project, conforming to these purposes:

- (1) It should be related to the theme of the Pageant: *Building Our America*.
- (2) It should make books important in the life of the group.
- (3) It should make prominent a "reading base"; that is, a foundation of books on which the structure of expression might be raised.
- (4) It should fuse different learning activities, such as graphic arts, dramatics, dancing, and music.
- (5) It should be the work of the children, strongly "creative," and should be related to the "regular" course of study and to the needs of the individual child.

The teachers blueprinted the program in November. Groups began to generate projects during the winter, while the organization of the Pageant developed tangibly. The period of intense activity was five weeks in February and March. The project culminated in a series of programs extended over three weeks in April.

In this series each of the five elementary schools presented for its parents and friends a Book Pageant conceived and executed within its own building. These semi-public programs constituted the "building level" of the program. Judges viewed the projects, and chose the best two from each building to combine with the work of the junior and senior high schools in a "master program," the finale of the Pageant of Books.

For the two evenings of the "master program," the senior high school was host to all. The program itself combined a series of stage shows with exhibits of art, handwork, and creative writing, and of audio-visual aids correlated with a "reading base." The frame of reference for the whole was an exhibit of over five hundred trade books.

The Englewood Pageant of Books was more than a conventional "book exhibit"; it was a coordinated educational program motivated by a professional purpose. Starting in the classrooms, with the child at his level and the resources at hand, the project centered learning activities on what the children read. It inspired them to more effective reading, and fostered their growth as persons. For the teacher, on the other hand, the Pageant meant reaching out for new resources, framing new ap-



proaches to learning, growing professionally.

Teachers in the first grade, particularly, were obliged to "think through" the Pageant. For their children were too little to profit from crowded evening exhibits. Over-stimulation was a danger. Furthermore, many of them could not yet read. It would have been easy to beg off with picture books and a guest story-teller. However, organization at the classroom level enabled the little folks to have rewarding experiences.

One teacher made especially effective use of the Pageant. When discussions began in October, she had already under way a guided reading program "following the children's interest as viewers of television." Her specific aims were to build appreciation of higher quality in viewing television and to "have the children read some literature before the year was over." The literature was, of course, the traditional folk and fairy tales of childhood. Early in October a "television stage" stood in this classroom, and children were experimenting with "television programs." At first the material of their favorite stories was too difficult for them to dramatize, but as reading readiness matured, more and more were able to read the various primers on the book table. Finally *The Three Bears* became a dramatization built democratically by the group. Charming and effectively presented, natural and spontaneous, it was a notable feature of the Children's Theater Hour of the master program.

Here the Pageant motivated a well conceived and forward-moving reading project. It encouraged the children's in-

terest in literature, fostered their pride in doing things well, and stimulated their reading achievement. Also, it helped create a group situation rich in social learning, and sharpened awareness of dramatic values other than rough comedy and gun-play. Related to the production of *The Three Bears* were number activities, drawing, writing poems about the bears. Music activities centered in selecting rhythms to express the different characters. The Pageant in this case strengthened an already beneficial learning experience.

*The Three Bears* illustrates the adaptability of the Pageant's plan. Here the teacher made use of the Pageant at the child's level, related reading to the child's interest, integrated learning activities in expressing what the children read. She could do this because the Pageant was not a superimposition; it evolved from the classroom situation.

In the upper elementary grades the Pageant generally developed from units in social studies. A particularly impressive sixth-grade program centered on Mexico: *Good Neighbors Build America*. Starting with informative material in the text, the class collected a reading base of approximately twenty-five relevant books and as many magazine articles. As a result of research reading, one group constructed a map, showing not only the usual geographic data, but ethnic concentrations, economic facts, and meteorological information. The classroom became a fiesta of serapes, Mexican hats, blankets, pottery, models of Mayan pyramids and temples, photographic displays, stamps, coins, products of Mexico, and art panels depicting the history of Mexico. But not all reading

was documentary. The group found that the late Dwight Morrow, formerly Ambassador to Mexico, had been a benefactor of Englewood's schools, and they gained understanding from this tangible interpretation of "good neighbor." The Morrow family lent them materials. Eventually Elizabeth Morrow's Mexican fantasy, *The Painted Pig*, became the subject of a puppet show written and produced by some of the group. In addition, the class produced a musical show in which all took part. Read material came alive in scenery, puppets, costumes, music, and dance. *Good Neighbors Build America* shows how a vigorous group used the Pageant to vitalize the course of study.

Fifth grade classes used a similar approach to the Pageant in relation to units on early American life. One group constructed a scale model of Boonesborough, four by ten feet. To authenticate the model and the costumes of the clay-figure pioneers, they assembled a reading base of fourteen books. Each child read at least one; some read all. A result of thorough research reading, the model crystallized in three dimensions of color and costume the meaning of pioneer life to twentieth-century children. However, behind this model was a program of mutual reporting, discussion, and interpretive dramatization, directed to help the children gain knowledge of hardship, appreciation of modern conveniences, understanding of patriotic themes, as well as concrete knowledge of pioneer customs, songs, games, and folkways. The children grew in reading interest, in appreciation, and in understanding. In some, the project revealed talent. *Boonesborough* illustrates a significant value of the Pageant. It was a corrective

force against the tendency to use tool subjects as ends in themselves, to fragmentize learning. The program provided an incentive unifying force, and established a frame of reference within which various activities could fuse into the expression of group learning.

*Boonesborough* and *Good Neighbors Build America* illustrate an indirect approach to the problem of leisure-time reading. The direct approach was also valid. A sixth-grade project, *Reader's Isle*, gave evidence of this point. *Reader's Isle* was a series of "book-character dolls," constructed of wire, newsprint, and gummed paper, dressed from scrap material in costumes designed and made by girls and boys, and mounted on wooden blocks against a frieze backdrop. This frieze presented a village, the bodies of its citizens taking the form of books which the children had read during the year. The pupils learned to make mutual recommendations of books, fostering interest and encouraging social learning. The most direct gains were in extensive reading. In an unselected group the lowest total of books read was ten, and the highest was ninety-eight. A "group climate" favorable to reading overcame the reluctance of "non-readers," many of whom made strong gains in reading skills.

Englewood's Book Pageant benefited not only the individual child, but also the teacher. For the alert, direct, and aggressive, the program was a resource and an opportunity. For the discouraged, it was a chance to "do what I have always thought of doing, but never had the courage to attempt." For the inexperienced, it was a professional learning experience.

The Pageant was never an end in itself. Its objective was more effective learning through more dynamic teaching.

The "master program" maintained this intrinsically professional purpose. It had two objectives: to reveal to parents and friends the marvel that children can create, and to direct the adults' awareness of reading values toward the interest of children. Its value as entertainment is substantiated by the fact that in two evenings it "drew" approximately four thousand persons. But the "master program" was more than a spectacle.

One half of Englewood's high school gymnasium was given over to three-dimensional exhibits. Here were *Boonesborough*, the Guatemalan church, *Reader's Isle*. Here, too, was a scale map of the United States, constructed of papier-mache, mounted, showing *The Building of America through Literature*. Developed by a seventh grade, the map designed the scenes of books the children had been reading: *The Human Comedy*, *The Sea Snake*, the Alcott books, *Moby Dick*, *Tom Sawyer*. It located the studies of American poets which each child had made. Decorated with costumed dolls and miniature books placed on shelves made in the junior high school shop, this map was the expression of months of cumulative reading, carefully developed to foster each child's personal growth.

Beside the map was a display of photographs, showing committees of ninth-grade students at work on a reading project which had produced seven hundred book reviews for their school library. The reviews themselves, in bound form, attested to the quality of the work. All about were

models and paintings, each with the book which it interpreted. Throughout the wonderland of the Pageant, never once was the visitor allowed to forget the presence of books.

In the other half of the gymnasium, closed off, one might see the Pageant's major dramatic programs. Among these was a well conceived adaptation of *Tom Sawyer*, written and acted by junior high school students. *Book Titles*, a twenty-minute quiz program, was another expression of what boys and girls had read. Dorothy Gordon's *You and Democracy* became the subject of a forum program, *Student Meets Author*, in which students from several junior high schools who had read the book met Mrs. Gordon, to discuss with her the issues which she raises. The Pageant's high point came with public awards to nine student prize-winners in competitive writing. Expression, the complement to reading, culminated in *Spring Snow*, an adaptation for radio of the Johnny Appleseed legend, written by a high school senior, and directed and produced by students, some of whom even composed the musical score and transcribed it. The visitor attended whatever program in the gymnasium he might wish to see. Otherwise, he made a tour of the building.

For this exploration, the guest had an escort, a young lady straight from the pages of *Little Women*. The visitor and hostess undoubtedly stopped in the *Children's Theater*, a series of programs presented by those in the primary grades and directed towards younger children. Here they saw, among others, *The Three Bears*, and an exhibit of about two hundred books for readers under twelve. Leaving there,

the two went from one classroom to another, noting the interpretive crayon drawings and water-color work, as well as tempera friezes; each of Englewood's seven schools had been assigned one room for display. In all, the guest noticed the emphatic association of graphic arts with books.

Moving to the second floor, the hostess took the guest to the high school library, where he found the display of books for older boys and girls. He noted an abundance of adult material; students in the eleventh and twelfth grades are no longer juveniles in reading interest. Adjoining the library the visitor found a "browsing room", with armchair, broadloom, reading lamp, hostess, a careful selection of classical records beside the victrola, and more books. He made a note of the twenty-five books "without reading which no one should graduate from high school," designated by two members of the junior class.

After lingering a while here, the guide and the guest continued through many classrooms, each replete with individual projects: a scale model of the set for *Journey's End*, a diorama of a scene from *Little Women*, a ceramic statuette of the renegade Simon Girty roped to the back of a runaway stallion, a series of pastels illuminating The Lord's Prayer. All this wealth of material was tangibly related to reading. The hostess took the guest to the exhibit of students' writing, where he spent some time studying the manuscripts of creative children, in particular the poems about the three bears.

They continued. At the exhibit of science fiction, the guest signed along with

several hundred others for a trip to the moon, and saw a model of the rocket ship to be used. In still another center of interest, he found a panoramic display of our cultural heritage, from Saxon times to the present. Here, about the bust of Milton, was an exhibit of materials used in teaching the blind to read, assembled with the help of the State Association for the Blind. Everywhere about him was the pageantry of the printed page.

Finally, in the school's furnished suite where interior decorating is taught, the guest entered the "complete book-furnished home". For this the Public Library had supplied the core of books. But the girls of senior business English, sponsoring the exhibit, had added their own selection: cook books, rules for Canasta, books on child care, a Prayer Book. Here was a home, with the family to greet the incomer. He received a copy of the Library's annotated Home Book List, which the girls had processed, designing an attractive cover for it. Later, a teacher explained to him that for these girls, many of whom within a very few years would be homemakers, the greatest gain of the Pageant was the realization that a home ought to be book-centered.

Thus the Pageant pointed directly to the need of the individual child, and had to make wide provision for individual differences. Yet it was not disunited. There was a common denominator.

The first factor in this denominator was that the Pageant was non-commercial; the Board of Education subsidized it. Thus assured of tangible support, the teachers focused attention on the child in school. Because there was no commercialization,



the Pageant gained active support from the New York Children's Book Council. The *Times* sent Mrs. Gordon, and aided with encouragement and suggestions. Publishers lent exhibits cordially; one wholesaler lent over half the book display. Everyone gave Englewood a hand.

Within the community, the Public Library extended its scheduled service to the schools, supplied bibliographies, purchased books where needed, supplied its own exhibit, helped set up displays. This last service was invaluable, for Englewood's plan required a sequence of exhibits. The Pageant brought the book display to the child in his own building, where it remained for two days. Thus the plan permitted controlled observation of books, free from distraction and pressure of time, by students in class groups, with a teacher available for reference. Here the Library rendered inestimable service to teachers and to principals.

Thus the second factor in the common denominator of the Pageant was cooperation. Parents and friends assisted with transportation, lent materials, and taught dances. The local press granted unprecedented space to advances written by the high school journalism class. Within the system, the Pageant generated common understanding among supervisors, principals, and teachers at various levels. Cooperation was never more effective.

A third unifying factor was the theme: *Building Our America*. The core of the book exhibit was a collection under this title. Furthermore, projects reflected various facets of the topic; for instance, informed citizens build America, safety

builds America, the family builds America. *Boonesborough* worked from the historical interpretation. *Reader's Isle* started with *Books Build America*. The timeliness of the theme generated interest among the children and the public.

A fourth coordinating force was unity of approach. Generally, teachers capitalized on outside resources, emphasized integration of different means of learning, stressed social outcomes. There was common emphasis on the impact of the book on the child.

Some benefits of the Pageant were at once apparent. The number of cards taken out at the Public Library increased, and circulation for March was 900 volumes ahead of 1950 figures. Morale rose generally. Students read more widely. Those who had shunned reading were often magnetized into the field of group action. Teachers gained renewed understanding of their own purposes. A notable gain in public relations went on the record. Books became important in Englewood.

Yet the problem is still present: how secure these values where they are evident? Englewood must hold the reading gains. True, many children developed poise, made adjustment, or found self-confidence through successful participation. These benefits must continue. Parents left the Pageant alert to the necessity that they become actively interested in what their children read. Are they still so alert? A project like the Englewood Pageant of Books is valid primarily in the follow-up. However, Englewood's teachers are convinced that this program has been only one step in an extending campaign for wider and more effective children's reading. And

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# Living and Learning In First Grade

VICTORIA WAGNER<sup>1</sup>

Since the days of the little red school-house, fond parents have been sending their six-year-olds off to school with the hope that they would learn their lessons well and some day become a credit to their families. In those days, Johnny wasn't in school very long before he was called upon at home, when company came, to read or recite, or in some other way show that he was being educated.

Things are a little different now. Johnny isn't forced to read as soon as he enters school, and he learns very little by rote. Consequently, Aunt Mary and Cousin John are positive that Johnny really isn't learning anything at all. Progressive education may be all right, they say, but what does he do in school all day? Aunt Mary and Cousin John are not alone. Many people wonder what goes on in a progressive school day after day, and for those who have never visited one, it might be interesting to get a "teacher's-eye-view" of a day's activities.

Imagine yourself as a teacher of a group of first graders. Some of them already know how to read, some have picked up a great deal of general information; others have special talents in science or the arts. Their background will represent varying economic standards, but generally superior intellectual ones.

So much for your pupils and your tools. As for your academic goal, that will be outlined for you only in a general way. You will have a schedule for daily activity;

that is, the children will go to the gymnasium at a given time, eat lunch at a given time, have their rest, and go to music class at designated periods. But as for the time of day and the length of time to pursue any academic work, that is entirely up to you.

Your job? Bring these children through a year of work and play together—satisfying those who are the most demanding; stimulating those who are the most retiring. Help each child to recognize his own worth and talents as an individual, yet make him understand that he is a part of a group and that his development as an individual also contributes to the growth of the class as a whole.

At this point you may well wish for a return to the old system... the rigid discipline, the pat routine, the day-to-day hard and fast lesson plan. But the absence of all rigidity is a challenge to the teacher in a progressive school, and while she recognizes the responsibility that is hers, she will tell you that she wouldn't teach in any other type of school.

But how does she accomplish her academic goal for the year and at the same time not apply pressure? How can she take the seeming confusion which results when twenty children express their own personalities all at once, and turn it into a learning process?

<sup>1</sup>Principal, Ethical Culture Schools, New York. This article was prepared with the cooperation of the classroom teacher and the parent chairman.

The theory behind the operation of a progressive school is that a happy child learns well. That does not mean, however, that his whims must be catered to, or that he must be allowed to ride rough-shod over others. Rather, it means that he must come each day into a relaxed atmosphere where there is an attempt to understand his behavior. Rather than gear the child to the method of study, the method of study is geared to the child. Consequently, school is an experience to look forward to each morning.

Kathy comes in early one day radiantly announcing, "I have something to tell at discussion." Discussion periods usually take place first thing in the morning in order to allow the children to get things off their chests, so to speak. These are not mere "chatter sessions" The children share their experiences with the others, and at the same time learn to express themselves concisely, or listen respectfully as the case may be. This morning you have seen just one of our goals achieved, for Kathy is bubbling over with information about her trip to a candy factory. . . . Kathy a short time ago was so completely alone and unapproachable that it was difficult to imagine her glowing with enthusiasm as you see her now.

After a few minutes' discussion, someone will notice that it is nearly time to go to the gym. There are no bells in the school to signal periods, so even the smallest children soon become aware of time, and schedule. This, of course, teaches them not merely how to tell time, but acquaints them with their schedule and gives them a respect for some routine without the necessity for adult prodding to get ready

for this or that. The child develops a sense of responsibility for his own activity.

After gym, there will be a free period, and although the children will choose their own activity for the most part, this is not mere aimless play, as it may appear to the casual observer. This is the period that offers the greatest opportunity for academic work. Some children may want to paint, color, or model with clay. Some may want to read. Or perhaps two or three children have collaborated on a project, such as the building of a bridge, or a boat, or perhaps a store.

You will move about from group to group, keeping all activity going, with practiced eye and ear determining how well each group is doing, giving help where help is necessary, but never interfering.

David, who has not yet settled on anything much to do, suddenly takes an interest in the store, and he wants to participate. Others become interested, too, and soon most of the children have gathered around. Here you must determine whether this is a thing of the moment, or whether the project will benefit the whole class; and if so, how you can help the entire group to get the most out of the cooperative venture. The three boys who started the store may work very well together, but by now they have formed a "clique" and any outside ideas or suggestions may be frowned upon. At the other extreme, there is Susan, who already can read fourth grade material, and would much rather stay in the "library corner" with a good book. The problem at this point is one of persuading the "clique" to let others in,

and at the same time getting Susan to want to join in the activity.

You have become well acquainted with most of the parents by this time, and you recall that Susan's father is an advertising man and has easy access to samples of certain foodstuffs. So you suggest: "Perhaps Susan could get her father to bring some empty cartons to display on the shelves."

Immediately, Susan becomes aware of herself as a person of some consequence in the group. She has the responsibility of making a contribution to a class project. For the moment, her contribution is a material one, but in time, she will give *herself* through her efforts and suggestions. Your triumph, of course, is that not only has Susan become attracted to the project, but the suggestion of actually stocking the shelves in the store has stimulated a great deal of thinking and planning on the subject. John promises to bring empty cans, Marian says she'll bring egg cartons, Jackie has a whole box full of play money for the cash register, and so it goes.

Before long, the project is in full swing. The "clique" has seen their idea grow far beyond their original conception of a store, and they seem happy in the realization that they started the ball rolling.

Here is where you make lesson plans . . . not on paper, but in your mind. The children will have their arithmetic lessons not through learning by rote that two and two are four, but by learning to measure accurately in order to build the enclosure to house the store; by actually making and counting change. Those who cannot read will see familiar boxes and cans on the

shelves and begin to pick out a word here and there. They will become conscious of weights and measures, and will go home to mother with choice bits of advice such, as, "If you buy the large box of cereal you'll save money, because there is twice as much cereal in the big box, but it doesn't cost twice as much money."

Of course, a store, in order to function properly, must have electric lights and a telephone. The science teacher will be glad to help with the lights if necessary, but that is not likely in this case because Joseph, who felt so completely out of it among the athletes in the gym this morning, is a wizard with wires and gadgets and he will rig up a light, a door bell and a two-way buzzer in no time at all.

The telephone idea is a splendid one. With the help of the shop teacher a huge dummy dial can be built and the children will soon know how to dial their own numbers and those of their friends.

All of these plans will have to wait now, though, because it is time to wash up and get ready for lunch. After lunch, there will be an hour's active play on the roof playground, and when that is over, there will be a rest period in a quiet, darkened room.

To end the day, there will be a music period. Not only is this a time for singing songs together, but every child will have a chance to play simple melodies on the bells, or pick out a favorite tune on the piano. There will be interesting little stories about the old masters, and there will be records played, some of which have been brought by the children to share with their classmates.

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# There's No Freeze On Language

WILLIAM P. KNODE<sup>1</sup>

"Then he got mad."

"Then he became—*became what*, George?" The voice from the back of the room was a trifle impatient. Miss Smith had sat down there, beside the visitor, to listen to George read his story about how he and another boy had dug a ground hog out of his hole and taken him home for a pet. George had been a little flustered at first, facing the class and the visitor. But then he had settled into his story, fixing his mind on what was happening, until interrupted. "*Became what*, George?"

"Why—well, he was cornered and got—I mean, he *became* mad."

This seemed to be the best George could do. He was grinning, but there was nothing defiant in his frank, open face.

"He became *angry*, George—not mad. He didn't have rabies, did he?"

"No, he was just—"

"Besides, I think you had better call him a woodchuck, George, instead of a ground hog. It sounds better."

George dutifully made the substitutions and went on with his story. He made the capture of the ground hog quite vivid, promptly forgetting to call it a woodchuck. He was obviously a bright boy, keen in his impressions, and with relationships well established between the words in his vocabulary and the objects of his experience. One felt that the ground hog was putting up quite a fight, there at the end of his burrow—that he was mad, *good and mad*.

Later, at the faculty lunch table, Miss Smith's mind turned to other matters and she spoke simply and naturally, without particular attention to her diction. She spoke the way George had spoken. In these circumstances the visitor distinctly heard Miss Smith refer to a person of her acquaintance as an old *fossil*. She also said she was *allergic* to him. As she took leave after lunch, she excused herself by saying that she was *sponsoring* a play and consequently had several things on her *agenda* before classes resumed for the afternoon.

As a teacher Miss Smith obviously has good intentions—and some imperception. She encourages her pupils to write about things they have seen or done, and, provided she insists on accuracy and reasonable fullness of representation, she is helping them objectify and socialize their experience, thus establishing two skills basic to all effective communication. She tries, even though some of her methods may be of doubtful value, to get her pupils interested in the exact values of words. She knows in a general way that the meanings of words change, as etymology shows. She exemplifies, as in using *fossil*, *allergic*, *sponsor*, and *agenda* in senses much newer than the sense of *mad* that prompted her to criticism of George, that as a normal human being she can use the living language quite well—for there is nothing objectionable in these uses, though not all dictionaries as yet recognize all of them. What she does not perceive is that the

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processes that have been changing meanings slowly are as operative today as ever, and that to oppose them is not only futile but may actually be harmful to the children whose communicative skills are being formed under her guidance.

*Mad* is of no particular importance except as it is representative of hundreds of other words that have acquired new meanings. By understanding what has happened to *mad* we may also understand what has happened or is happening to most of our vocabulary. *Mad* at one time did commonly mean insane (though this may not have been the earliest meaning in English). It is reasonable to suppose that sometimes speakers were less aware of the lunacy of a mad person than of his anger, and that when they said he was mad *they meant* chiefly that he was angry—finally only that he was angry. To put this in more general terms, an element that was already present but hitherto relatively unnoticed in the total complex of the word's reference was singled out by a shift of attention, and as the same word was used to convey this change of emphasis it acquired a "new" meaning, the "old" meaning continuing to exist, as is usually the case, along with the new one. Later, by a similar process, the reference of the word was extended to animals, particularly rabid ones.

Linguists usually distinguish at least four varieties of change in meaning. In everyday language these kinds of change may be called *widening*, *narrowing*, *lowering*, and *raising*. A few examples of each will show not only what is special but also what is general in these processes.

*Dog* illustrates widening. In Anglo-Saxon times *dog* referred to a distinct kind,

possibly what we now specify as mastiff, but today the reference has of course been extended to any of the whole tribe of canines, from chihuahua to Saint Bernard. *Propaganda* likewise at one time referred only to the missionary work of a religious faith, but by a series of extensions has come to denote any of a wide range of activities, on the part of secular organizations or even private individuals, intended to influence group beliefs, attitudes, and conduct.

The word *girl* exemplifies the process of narrowing. At one time a girl might be a young person of either sex; if there was need to distinguish, a male child was called a *knave girl* and a female child a *gay girl*. A *niece* at one time might be a granddaughter, or more remote female descendant. A *nephew* might be a grandson, even a niece. A *bride* might be the husband. *Worm* was in olden times any creature that crept or crawled, and in some accounts it was as a worm that Satan presented himself to Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Words not only have objective reference but also usually convey some attitude of the speaker towards the object of reference. Changes in this particular kind of connotation are called lowering or raising. For example, *clumsy* at one time meant having one's fingers numb with cold, while a *fickle* person was deceitful, even treacherous. A *clown* was a peasant before he became a circus performer or an amateur entertainer at parties; a *boor* was also once a peasant, not necessarily ill-mannered.

Some linguists distinguish a fifth kind of change, namely metaphor. When a pilot borrows the word *ceiling* to refer to a



layer of cloud limiting visibility or to the maximum height at which a plane can fly, he is speaking metaphorically. So is the person who slangily remarks that someone is *on the beam*, or *off the beam*. So was Miss Smith when to express her impatience with the inability of her principal to change his set ideas she compared him to a piece of petrified bone dug out of the earth. There is a great amount of metaphor in our current language. Much of its passes unnoticed as worn and defaced cliché, but the supply is being constantly added to with the fresh, bright coinages of speakers who perceive new analogies in the experiences of everyday living.

Sometimes an early meaning of a word may be so far removed from a present meaning that the imagination has difficulty in bridging the gap. It is indeed by a long and devious development that *nice* has changed its meaning from silly or stupid, common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to agreeable or pleasant, as in "We had a nice time at the picnic." At first one may be puzzled to see how a *deck*, once a covering or ceiling, could become a floor (possibly setting a precedent for price ceilings). Yet in all cases the steps in the extensional process are definite and understandable in terms of human psychology. Regardless of the particular variety of change, speakers have always applied the analogy of past experience to their analysis of new experience, and with new focuses of attention have added new values to old words.

It is important that the teacher understand this continuous process of language change and that she make use of her un-

derstanding in her daily teaching. This applies not merely to English teachers, but to every teacher, for every teacher inevitably has an influence, for good or bad, on the communication habits of her pupils.

Before entering school, children have necessarily been very attentive to *some* of the language about them. The responsible teacher will try to intensify this alertness and extend it to more and more of the language in the child's speech community. She will not try to "correct" or ban any of these usages, except as they may be local or socially substandard. As soon as practicable she will encourage use of a reliable dictionary, having first made sure that it is reliable. But she will not suppose that the dictionary is necessarily the last word about all matters of meaning or usage, for in their function of recording rather than prescribing usage dictionaries necessarily lag somewhat behind new developments in the language.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the labels used by dictionary editors to describe the status of words need to be clearly understood. For example, the label *colloquial* (applied, for instance, to the word *mad* in the sense of "angry") does not mean that there is anything substandard about this use, but rather that it is confined to conversation, or to writing that reproduces the informality of the spoken language. Since most people have even less occasion to use formal language than to wear white tie or long dress, this means that in most situations colloquialisms are quite all right. Likewise the label *slang* should not lead one to hasty conclusions. A word so labeled, even in a recent dictionary, may no longer have that

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# Adventures in Children's Literature

EDITH F. MILLER<sup>1</sup>

There are so many ways by which literature may be made meaningful to children that it is well to stop occasionally to consider whether we are using enough variety in our classroom procedures.

I recently made a list of some activities enjoyed by elementary pupils of all ages. The list follows:

1. Hearing poetry or prose read by the teacher.
2. Taking part in a story hour where previously prepared material is read by the pupils.
3. Telling and listening to stories.
4. Finding as many versions of a story as possible.
5. Giving spontaneous dramatizations of stories and poems.
6. Giving planned dramatizations of stories and poems.
7. Keeping individual records of books read.
8. Giving a movie or puppet show based on a story.
9. Browsing through the library.
10. Discussing books (Acting as "Book Critics").
11. Illustrating stories.
12. Making clay models of book characters.
13. Writing book reviews.
14. Making up book riddles.
15. Looking at the book news section of the bulletin board.

16. Looking at exhibits of books, figurines, dolls, etc.
17. Hearing the teacher recite poems from memory.
18. Compiling an anthology.
19. Memorizing favorite selections of poetry.
20. Planning arrangements for choral speaking.
21. Reliving experiences through literature.
22. Enjoying stories and poems written by the teacher.
23. Writing original stories and poems.

The activities mentioned on the last half of the list may need further description.

Most children like to write book reviews. Small children will dictate these to the teacher while older children will write them on practice paper, have them corrected and then copy them on filing cards to be placed at the disposal of the class. A study of book reviews should precede the writing. Frank statements should be encouraged. If Jack writes in his review, "I found this book very hard to read," it gives an idea of the difficulty of the book to other would-be readers. If Jane writes, "This story would be more interesting to boys than to girls," it will help influence other children's selections. Often conflicting viewpoints expressed in two pupils' book reviews will lead to spirited class discussions.

<sup>1</sup>Glen Ridge, N. J.

Book riddles are also enjoyed by all. Older pupils can make theirs much more difficult than this sample one written by a third grade pupil.

"I live with my mother, my brothers and my sisters. I went to Mr. MacGregor's farm. I got into trouble there. Now I am sick in bed. Who am I?"

Riddles may deal with the characters, author, title, plot, location of story, what happened next or countless other phases. They may be read aloud for the class to guess, used in silent reading games, posted on the bulletin board or used on the riddle page of a class newspaper.

A section of the bulletin board will be well used if reserved for displaying material about books. If it is possible to have the library corner nearby, the bulletin board exhibit will inspire reading of the books at hand. Even in the primary grades a committee can see that the bulletin board material is frequently changed.

Suitable material includes book jackets, sample pages, pages from discarded books, textiles printed with story book characters, poetry broadsides, book reviews and pictures and clippings of short stories or poems.

In addition an interesting collection of pictures of characters in literature may be compiled by a study of advertisements. The advertising matter may be cut off, reserving captions such as, "Remember the hare and the tortoise," or "The magic pitcher was never empty." Children like to try to find the books or stories illustrated by these ads.

Teacher-written messages such as, "There is a new book in the library" often

serve as a stimulation to reading. So too do captions such as these under clippings or pictures.

"Read this review if you are interested in an airplane story."

"This illustration is for a story written by the author of *My Friend Flicka*."

Children's own work should have an important place in the display. Illustrations, individual records of books read, original stories and poems, book reviews, and book riddles may all be used.

Book exhibits will be arranged from time to time to suit various needs. At Christmas time an exhibit of holiday stories will be welcomed; at another time an exhibit of plays or poetry will be featured. In connection with the current unit of study appropriate fiction should be displayed to supplement the needed factual material.

Wooden or clay models of story book characters or dolls dressed to represent familiar folks of fiction are always of interest to children and may serve as a starting point for similar activities of their own.

Poetry can be made an important part of the children's lives by introducing it whenever the children have stimulating experiences.

One morning an ice storm made a veritable fairyland of the countryside. After the children had freely discussed their experiences and impressions, I put on the board some of the words and phrases they had used to describe the scenery. Then I read and recited several poems about ice and snow and the children were delighted to find that many of their own words had been used by the poets. Fol-

lowing this those who wished to do so wrote their own poetry.

A gift of beautiful rose buds still wet with dew resulted in a similar poetry appreciation period. How meaningful a line like, "The hillside's dew-pearled" (from Browning's "Pippa Passes") becomes after such a discussion.

The things that are important to individual children may be amplified in the same manner. When Robert comes to school eager to tell about having seen a woodpecker he will be delighted if his teacher quotes him a few lines from "The Woodpecker" by Elizabeth Madox Roberts. The teacher who has many such selections at her command is fortunate. The next best thing is to have poems that are popular with children always on hand for easy reference.

Instead of having to look through several books for a specific poem the teacher will find it invaluable to compile her own anthology. A simple looseleaf book of typed selections is easy to make. If desired it may be illustrated with drawings made by pupils or teacher or by tiny pictures cut from notepaper, greeting cards, magazines, and other sources. Poems may be found quickly if the pages are arranged in respect to their topics and the sections marked with tabs labelled, "The Circus," "Brds," "Pet," "Spring," "Weather," "Humor," etc. As a class develops a new interest the teacher will look for poems dealing with that theme. Many types of poetry should be introduced—free verse, blank verse, jingles, limericks, nonsense rhymes, lyric poems, and narrative poetry should all be included. I have found that rigid grade levels for poetry simply do not

exist. A poem which may become a sixth grade favorite is sometimes found on a recommended list for second grade enjoyment. The reverse also may be true. After a class has had the opportunity to hear many poems, those that they thoroughly enjoyed may be added to the teacher's anthology.

Sometimes a class will like to make its own anthology, or individual anthologies will be desired. Older pupils may use manuscript lettering to make beautiful pages or mimeographed copies of class favorites may be given out and the individual selections made from these. Children should put into their books only the poetry they really like, including their own original poems.

Such experiences with poetry often inspire the spontaneous learning of lines or poems, or the pupils' desire to learn an entire poem. No one should be compelled to join the group which is memorizing a poem. It has been my experience that when choral speaking is to be used as a means of memorizing poetry, almost everyone wishes to take part. Choral speaking gives an opportunity for each child to give his own interpretation of the various parts before the best interpretations are agreed upon. Children enjoy planning who shall say the different parts and how they shall be rendered. Choral speaking also gives a chance for shy children to participate and for children who find it difficult to memorize poetry to learn short selections.

As another means of using literature to help the pupils relive and broaden their own experiences I use appropriate books. When Donald came to school enthusiastic



about his trip over the George Washington Bridge he was thrilled to be shown a book with pictures and stories about the bridge and other things he had seen.

A moth came from our cocoon in the Spring. Some factual material, pictures, and a delightful story about a moth helped us recapture the mood of our discovery and added to our knowledge.

When suitable material is not available, the teacher may write her own story or poem to amplify a class experience. A primary class would enjoy a story based on their own trip to the woods. An upper grade would appreciate having some of the hard-to-find material needed to answer their questions about geology worked up by the teacher into story form. This kind of writing also encourages children to write their own material based on individual or class experiences.

Jane may be encouraged to write up into story form her discovery of a robin's nest and the fun she had watching the baby robins grow. John may make an exciting story about his two electric trains that crashed into each other.

One of my classes wrote an imaginative story about the summer adventures of two city children visiting a farm. Our own experiences of seeing a bull, discovering a mother duck on her nest and being chased

by the geese, were all worked into the story. To keep the writing from being too factual I read a wealth of fanciful material to the class.

Many children go on from this kind of writing to entirely original work not based on experience. One sixth grade became absorbed in writing mystery and adventure stories. Whatever type of story is chosen, the goal should be stories of high literary quality. A study of good literature in that specific field and a discussion of the plot, characterization, and expressive words, will be helpful.

If the pupils do not branch out into imaginative writing easily, sometimes a device such as the use of magazine covers will prove to be an inspiration. These often have charming pictures of children or animals that just naturally suggest stories. Having the children make up a class story spontaneously is one possibility. One child will start the story and others will add their individual ideas until the story is ended. A little practice improves the technique and insures better stories. At another time each child may tell his own original story. Primary children would enjoy a library book consisting of the pictures accompanied by the best original stories about them. Older children can write splendid imaginative stories using such pictures as a point of departure.

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#### BOOKS BUILD AMERICA

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in that conviction lies the conclusion. In the words of a completely tired teacher, sitting amid the ruins of an exhibit "the

morning after" the final Pageant program: "It was the hardest work I ever did in my life, but it was worth every minute."



# Let Boys and Girls Choose Their Own Poetry

RACHEL PALM<sup>1</sup>

Why don't we apply what we have learned about the reading of books to the reading of poetry?

Junior high school boys and girls like to choose their own books. We have learned that. They rebel at reading books forced upon them but have an entirely different attitude when they can select their own books.

Let boys and girls choose their own poetry! Do they know that all poems are not about "trees and love stuff" as one very normal eighth grader expressed it? Is there any reason why they have to study that kind?

We have found they choose books about animals, sports, aviation, and industry. We have found they like narrative poetry. Then let's present poems on these subjects and present the forms of poetry that make sense to them.

It is necessary, if we are to teach any poetry at all, to present the kind that they understand. The teacher's favorite poem usually means nothing to them, no matter how enthusiastic she is about it. Have they had the same experience or background to bring to the poem?

Let us give them poems that they can understand through their own experience. They like "Casey at the Bat" at the time most of them are following the scores of the World Series. John Magee's "High Flight" is surely nearer to their experiences than "The Psalm of Life."

We can make available many, many kinds of poetry and let the boys and girls discover those they like and choose to talk about. They will find the poems they like. Then they will like poetry.

<sup>1</sup>A teacher in Batavia, Ill. This article was written in the summer session class of Mrs. Helen Rand Miller, at Northern Illinois State Teachers College, DeKalb.

There are 25,000 foreign students in this country today. During the next few years the number will rise to 50,000, the U. S. Office of Education predicts.

The tremendous increase in the number of very young children has been the outstanding change during the last ten years in the composition of America's population. Children under five years of age increased by about five and one-quarter million (50%) rising from 10,542,000 in 1940 to 15,805,000 in 1950. The

population under five increased at four times the rate at which the total population grew.

He who reads without discernment and choice, and, like Bodin's pupil, resolves to read all, will not have time, nor more capacity neither, to do anything else. He will not be able to think, without which it is impertinent to read; nor to act, without which it is impertinent to think.

—Lord Bolingbroke

# Choral Speaking In The Junior High School

ANN A. CAVALLARO<sup>1</sup>

The choral speaking program presents an ideal medium for varied group experience on the junior high school level. It surpasses, in some respects, the opportunities afforded by vocal music and dramatics; it can, in any event, be worked into the curriculum as a valuable adjunct to these activities.

The changing voice in boys, regardless of the degree of wisdom with which it is handled, presents a real obstacle to satisfactory singing in mixed groups. In the junior high schools all stages of change, from painless deepening to the tragicomic crack, are on display. The chorus too frequently becomes a strictly feminine activity, intensifying the notion—not uncommon to adolescent boys—that there is something "sissy" about singing. Even where heroic attempts are made to continue the experience of classroom singing in mixed groups, the ineptness and unpleasant effects produced by the boys' efforts, as compared with the strengthened and enriched girls' voices, inhibits full participation. But choral speech can be a unifying experience, totally expressive, rich in emotional satisfactions and prompt with its rewards—an important factor to those of an age of anxiety, vacillating confidence, and unformed values.

Unlike dramatics, choral speaking finds a perfect laboratory in the classroom. Although classroom dramatizations are extremely effective on the primary level and may be employed with some success in the intermediate grades, junior high

school students expect a higher standard of perfection, more finished details, and greater dramaturgical expertness, and thus need a stage and all its concomitants, as well as the incentive of public performance. And the dramatic performance at once presents problems of fastidious selection. The play is the project of a limited number of individuals chosen for talent and suitability. The rest are audience. Their participation is passive; they are, at best, appreciative.

Choral speaking, on the other hand, lends itself to the heterogeneous group. The dark and light voices, the weak and the strong, even the occasional "sawbone" and sibilant whisperer are acceptable here; and the unbeautiful effects can be hushed, blended, corrected in the group, or put to effective use as solo oddities.

The group works for *musical* values, for *dramatic* values, and for *word* values. We have, first of all, a frontal approach to problems of diction and enunciation. A choral speech group learns to know intimately suitable literary gems, gains in terms of personality and emotional control, and increases its active vocabulary. Words that never come to life through dictionary drill and arbitrary sentence concoction become forever meaningful as a result of the choral experience. The tonal and rhythmic content of speech, as emphasized in choral speaking, lead to an increased awareness of these properties, as

<sup>1</sup>Spartanburg, S. C.

of speech errors and monotony, and tend to stimulate the imagination. Rhythm, timing, interpretation, dynamic contrast, and vowel color are basic to good speech and transferable to music listening and participation.

Perhaps the most beneficial by-product, however, is an enhanced appreciation of literature. The study of literature in the junior and senior high schools has grown anemic, unequal to the competitive tug-of-war of the comics ("classic" and otherwise), radio, television, the motion picture, and titillating pulp periodicals. Poetry, in particular, is the pariah of the classroom. Most adolescents have already slammed the door shut upon the experience of poetry which, absent from mass entertainment, becomes a mere memory of childhood (Mother Goose, the nursery jingles), an effete exercise for the crackpot, or acceptable only in Tin Pan Alley setting. Choral speaking will not cure this, but it can neutralize and counteract it, and do so with infinite psychological subtlety. For choral speaking offers pleasure, participation alongside one's peers, emotional release, fun in an uncomplicated and unlaborious activity—all this, and literature, too.

And for the outstanding performer, there remains the incentive of the solo assignment, which can be a display of virtuosity or provide any effect ingenuity cares to contrive. We have competition, but not of the noxious sort. Effort, rather than the god-given gift, can be singled out for reward.

The choric group is essentially, though not exclusively, a performing organization. The absence of casting and staging prob-

lems and the lessened dependence upon individual talent eliminate much of the preparatory tension that accompanies musical and dramatic productions. Yet, for public performance, very high standards of precision and finish should be mandatory. Only a stirring performance will bring the excitement and wholehearted approbation that completes the experience for the participant and renders it a desirable one, important to his scheme. The performance, therefore, should be fairly formal, with scrupulous planning given entrances, exits, stances, timing, and appearance. The use of robes or vestments may prove effective, though I confess a negative bias here. Lump-like uniformity is not at all necessary either for assembly or evening program.

Program-building is one of the most challenging aspects of the choral speaking project. The program must have great tonal variety, else—no matter how expert—it becomes monotonous. The mood contrasts must be immediate and frequent: no two successive numbers should bear any resemblance to each other. The lofty invocation should be followed by the patter poem, the passionate epic by the homey dialect piece, the dirge by the percussive display.

The following program is intended as a suggestion:

1. *Old Ironsides* Oliver Wendell Holmes  
A good starting selection, employing the unison choir in a vivid, vehement, exclamatory style.
2. *Jonathan Bing* Beatrice Curtis Brown  
Pure nonsense, delicious exaggeration. Two soloists may set

- off the choir in this easy and winsome poem.
3. *Boots*                      Rudyard Kipling  
Highly charged: anguish, rebellion, despair. They will enjoy the marching rhythm, firm, then staggering.
4. *The Highwayman*        Alfred Noyes  
The symphonic "pièce de resistance" of this program. Romantic-dramatic, enormously appealing. Clucking effects for the horses' hooves; solo voices for the highwayman and Bess.
5. *The Swing*                      R. L. Stevenson  
This childish lyric, a perennial favorite, affords emotional relaxation.
6. *The Congo*                      Vachel Lindsay  
Bring on the whole percussion battery for this stunning primitive with its bizarre rhythmic effects.
7. *The Raggedy Man*        James W. Riley  
Folksy Americana  
Encore: Group of limericks—the sillier the better, rendered by the unison choir in the truly grand manner.

## LIVING AND LEARNING IN FIRST GRADE

(Continued from Page 335)

It is dismissal time now, and the children are tired; but since their afternoon had been planned to "taper off" with quiet activity, they are going home relaxed. Tomorrow the work on the store will begin in earnest, and for many days to come there will be activity centered around the class project that will teach innumerable academic lessons and at the same time foster group cooperation.

Tomorrow, too, there will be a class in rhythms, and a period in shop. Next week there will be some new pets in the room

... a guinea pig, some white rats, or maybe a hamster.

There are many absorbing things to do in the days that are ahead and they will add up to a year of interesting, educational fun shared by children who have learned to respect each other, and have also begun to find themselves.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Many readers will ask, "Is such a program possible with larger classes and lower IQ's?" A number of teachers who have tried such programs will reply in the affirmative. But small classes and good equipment are almost essential. —Editor.

## THERE'S NO FREEZE ON LANGUAGE

(Continued from Page 338)

status in the speech community, for it is in the nature of slang either to die out quickly or else to move up to the respectability of colloquial usage.

With these understandings, a teacher will look upon changes in language not as corruption, but as growth. Her attitude towards her pupils as they use the living

language will be one, not of prohibition, but of permission. For it is only through the free, meaningful, and successful use of the language which the child hears and reads that he can satisfy his individual and social need to objectify his experiences and through communication establish community with his associates.



# Supplementary Materials in the First Grade Reading Program

DAVID H. RUSSELL<sup>1</sup>

AND

GRETCHEN WULFING<sup>2</sup>

Many school procedures become common before they are fully investigated by research. The present study concerns one such practice in the first grade reading program. The practice of reading only one basic reader a semester has disappeared except in the most underprivileged schools, but competent teachers currently differ widely in the way they use a wide variety of reading materials. Many teachers start their pupils in one basic series of readers and then have them read widely in several other sets of first grade reading materials, although there is no complete research proof whether considerable work with one basic series or the early introduction of supplementary materials is desirable.

At the present time, first grade teachers differ widely in the times at which they introduce supplementary materials into the reading program. Some excellent teachers add supplementary preprimers when the children have finished the basic preprimers. Some have the children complete or nearly complete the basic primer before they place supplementary preprimers in the children's hands. Some capable teachers known to the writers have the children go at least part way through the basic first reader before they introduce the children to supplementary preprimers. The usual justification given by the first group is "my children need much practice in easy material before they go on to the harder work of the primer and first reader." The commonest explanation of the third group is, "I believe first grade children should have much experience in the restricted vocabulary and careful gradation of one basic

series before they go into several reading series."

This study is a preliminary investigation of the problem of when to add supplementary reading materials to a first grade child's reading fare. It compares the reading achievement of three groups of children in the first grade (1) those who read supplementary materials after finishing the preprimers of the basic series (2) those who read supplementary materials after finishing the primer of the basic series and (3) those who read supplementary materials only after they had read about half of the first reader of the basic series. The investigation must be regarded as preliminary because of the small numbers of children involved but it points the way in method toward a more complete scientific study of the problem of when and how to introduce supplementary materials in the first grade program.

## Procedures

This investigation involves 120 children in six first grade classes of the Oakland Public Schools, Oakland, California. The six superior teachers who taught the classes involved in the study, used one of the methods outlined above in their use of reading materials. Two introduced supplementary materials after the children had finished the preprimers of the basic series, two after the primer of the basic series, and two when the children were about half way through the first reader. Three of the teachers used the *Curriculum Foundation Series* basally and three used the *Ginn Basic Readers* basally.

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<sup>2</sup>Oakland Public Schools.

The two series mentioned and the *Learning to Read Program* were used as supplementary readers if not used basally. The schools were situated in comparable socio-economic neighborhoods of middle-class status, the teachers each used grouping for purposes of reading instruction, and each of the teachers followed rather closely the suggestions for teaching in the manual or guide book accompanying the basic materials.

It may be noted that the two series used basically in the study differ somewhat in their recommendations for the use of supplementary materials in the first grade. The publishers of one series recommend, "In first grade, it is best to postpone reading of materials outside the basic program until children have successfully completed the work of the basic primer. Before that time, the reading of unrelated materials is likely to present too many vocabulary difficulties and to interfere with rather than help the children's progress in reading." The authors of the second series recommend the introduction of supplementary materials after about two-thirds of the primer has been read. Specific stories from other reading series are listed in the teacher's manual at this point.

During the second or third week of the fall semester each class was given the Stone-Grover Reading Readiness Test. Toward the end of the year, during the last week of May, each class was given the Gates Primary Reading Tests (for Grade I and II first half) Type I Word Recognition and Type III Paragraph Reading. Another form of the same Gates' tests was also given to the classes near the end of their first semester in the second grade.

In addition to controlling the time at which she introduced supplementary materials each teacher kept a few qualitative notes on the progress of her pupils under the particular system of introducing supplementary materials.

### Results

The matching of the three groups of children in chronological age and reading readiness

scores is given in Table I. In addition this Table gives the reading achievement scores near the end of two and of three semesters of school work. The mean scores indicate that the children involved were typical of the larger sample of children in the first grades of the Oakland schools. They also indicate that there is little, if any, superiority to be attributed to any method of introducing supplementary materials at different stages in the first grade reading program.

This lack of difference between the results of the three methods at the end of the first grade is repeated when the children are half-way through the second grade. There is a slight tendency for the second group (those who read supplementary materials after finishing the basic primer) to have a lower score than the others at the end of the first year and for the third group (those who read supplementary materials only after reading in the basic first reader) to have a lower reading score half-way through the second grade. These differences, however, are not statistically significant and should be regarded not as conclusions, but as items for further study.

Another indication of reading achievement used in the study was the level of material read by the children in the directed reading lessons. Here again the achievement seemed to be much the same in the three main groups. Toward the end of the low second grade, for example, in each of the classes the fast-learning group within the class had finished the basic Second Reader Level I. The average group had finished the First Reader and the slowest group in the class had started the First Reader. In other words, the chief differences in reading achievement were not among the three experimental groups but within each class in terms of the learning ability of the individual children.

Particularly since there is a lack of statistical differences, the teachers' qualitative judgments are of interest. Each of the four teachers who introduced supplementary materials after pre-primers and after the primer liked the systems

TABLE I  
Matching Data and Reading Achievements of 120 children in the First and Low  
Second Grades who Began Reading Supplementary Materials at Three Different Times.

	N	C. A. (months)		Stone- Grover	Gates I (Hi. 1st)		Gates III (Hi. 1st)		Gates I (Low 2nd)		Gates III (Low 2nd)		
		M	S. D.		M	S. D.	M	S. D.	M	S. D.	M	S. D.	
After Pre-Primers	38	72	3.3	31	11.3	1.92	.47	1.88	.42	2.37	.55	2.44	.62
After Primer	40	70	3.2	26	12.7	1.84	.40	1.73	.18	2.68	.51	2.47	.68
During First Reader	42	70	2.1	32	14.9	1.88	.49	2.01	.31	2.17	.65	2.33	.68

(Continued on Page 371)

# A Re-Examination of the Vocabulary Question

CYNTHIA M. COLVIN\*

During the past half century the extent of children's vocabularies has been the subject for much research, discussion, and speculation. The remarkable aspect of the entire vocabulary question has been the singular lack of unanimity or even of general agreement among the various investigators in the field. Estimates concerning the total size of a child's vocabulary at any given age have varied from a few thousand words to figures that are twenty times as large.

## *Using the Abridged Dictionaries*

The earliest investigators tended toward conservatism in their estimates. For the most part they used abridged dictionaries, and chose representative words or samples from these dictionaries for their tests. Each word on the test theoretically represented ten or twenty words from the dictionary used, according to the exact sampling method used by the investigator. A subject knowing 100 words on a test in which each word represented 20 words was credited with knowledge of 2,000 words. On another test in which each word represented 10 words a subject who knew 100 words would be credited with a knowledge of only 1,000 words. Thus the scores obtained by the use of word lists from abridged dictionaries were necessarily limited by the size of the dictionary. Although a subject might know a majority of the words on a test, his score could not be higher than the total number of words in the dictionary. This relationship between the size of vocabulary and the size of the dictionary employed may be demonstrated by comparing the many vocabulary studies of the past 50 years.

The smallest dictionary employed in vocabulary investigation was Laird and Lee's Vest Pocket Dictionary containing 18,000 words. In 1916 Terman and Childs prepared a list of 100

words from the dictionary, and found that twelve-year olds knew 7,200 words. (21) The same test used by Neher resulted in substantially the same figures. (12) Holley devised a different type of test, but employed the Terman-Childs list of words and estimated that twelve-year olds knew 8,478 words. (4) Again, the list was used by Gillette who computed the size of vocabulary for college students, but opined that the test was too restrictive and that it understated the size of vocabulary of the persons to whom it was applied. (8) Previously, Gillette had tested his own knowledge of the words on the Terman-Childs list, and decided to re-test himself using a list from an unabridged dictionary containing 209,000 words. A comparison of his results reveals a striking variation. Gillette estimated that he knew a total of 127,800 words from the unabridged dictionary, whereas the highest score he had been able to achieve on the abridged dictionary was 16,833 words.

In 1907 Kirkpatrick chose 100 words from Webster's Academic Dictionary which contained 28,000 words. (11) Seventh-graders tested on the list knew 10,666 words out of the possible 28,000 words. Burch employed the same list to test children at an experimental and progressive school. (2) Seventh-graders knew 17,052 words, or about 6,000 more words than reported by Kirkpatrick. Burch attributed the difference to the curriculum of the school, which he described as being "intimately and vitally related to every-day life." Burch thought a larger dictionary might offer an opportunity for a more inclusive test, and re-tested the same children. Using the larger dictionary yielded larger vocabulary estimates.

Brandenburg estimated that seventh-graders

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knew 11,445 words out of a possible 28,000 words, and noted that his results varied slightly from those of Kirkpatrick who had used the same dictionary. (3) Symonds, primarily interested in distinguishing between recognition and recall vocabulary, devised a completion test to measure recall vocabulary. (20) Seventh-graders obtained similar scores in his study; 10,000 words were known on the Thorndike multiple choice part of the test and 10,600 words were known on the completion part of the test devised by Symonds. Doran had used various dictionaries on several occasions as bases for vocabulary estimates. (5) Seventh-graders knew 5,849 words from Webster's High-School Dictionary, yet they knew 13,675 words from Webster's International Abridged Dictionary. To test his own word knowledge he used the larger Century Standard Dictionary, and estimated he knew 84,000 words. Cuff, who selected 100 words from Webster's Shorter School Dictionary of 30,000 words, found that seventh-graders knew 14,910 words on a multiple-choice test. (4)

#### *Investigations Based on Unabridged Dictionaries*

The first investigator to use an unabridged dictionary after Kirkpatrick was Babbitt, who reported 50,000 to 60,000 words for college sophomores and stated:

If they had only 28,000 words to select from, it would not be surprising if they reported 20,000 words. I think that Professor Kirkpatrick made a mistake in using so small a book. (1)

Gerlach administered a test based on an unabridged dictionary to college students and reported 85,300 words for college sophomores. (4) Seashore began in 1933 the first of several investigations by using a Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary containing 145,000 words. (16) He estimated that college sophomores knew approximately 70,000 words from that dictionary. Seven years later working with Eckerson, he devised and administered to college students the English Recognition Vocabulary Test, Form

1. (15) The average number of words known by the student was estimated at approximately 156,000. (17) Methods of applying the test to children in Grades I-VIII were suggested and Smith tested groups of children from three elementary schools. (19) The children in the early elementary grades were tested individually and orally; those in the intermediate grades were tested in small groups and given aid in reading and writing. From Grade VII on, the test was administered to larger groups with occasional supervision and little aid in word recognition. Smith estimated 24,000 words for first-graders and 31,000 additional words for those in the seventh-grade.

Hartman suggested that Seashore's computations, apparently fantastic, were likely to underestimate grossly rather than overestimate vocabulary knowledge. (9) He pointed out that all vocabulary estimates apply only to the dictionaries upon which they are based, and that word recognition or reading vocabulary is more extensive than writing or speaking vocabulary. To prove his statement he compiled four lists of words from four different dictionaries, and found that the use of larger dictionaries resulted in larger vocabulary estimates.

Fox employed the Seashore-Eckerson test to measure the size of vocabulary of individuals 70-79 years of age. (7) She compared her estimate of 128,000 words with the 156,000 words reported by Seashore for college students, and concluded that the difference between the two studies was not surprising in view of the additional years of schooling acquired by the college students.

Schulman and Havighurst, attempting to learn whether a relationship exists between social status and vocabulary ability, used the Seashore-Eckerson test to measure the vocabulary knowledge of high-school freshmen and sophomores. (4) A consistently positive relationship between test scores and social status was revealed. The average number of words known by the ninth and tenth-grade groups,

38,900 and 41,400 respectively, was reasonably close to that reported by Smith.

### *Other Investigations*

In studying the extent of vocabulary in young children, Madorah Smith found that average vocabulary increased from nothing at eight months to 2,562 words at six years. (18) Williams revised and employed the Smith test to compare vocabulary ability of orphanage children with that of average children. (22) The orphanage children showed a decided vocabulary inferiority, a difference which Williams attributed to the lack of a rich everyday environment.

A method of estimating vocabulary size different from that of dictionary sampling was employed by Rinsland. (13) He assumed that children wrote the words they could understand, and proceeded to count every word in over 100,000 separate writings consisting of compositions, stories, and letters written by 230,000 children. After completing this monumental survey, Rinsland concluded that children in Grade I knew over 5,000 words and almost 18,000 were known to pupils in Grade VII. He stated that his survey had revealed the largest number of different words ever to be found in children's writings.

Figurel attempted to discover the extent of vocabulary of under-privileged children in Grades II-VI. (6) He assumed that a 20 minute writing period during which children were asked to write all the words they could think of, and which he called the "free-association" method, would measure the size of children's vocabularies. He estimated the average vocabulary of underprivileged children in the sixth-grade to be 3,536 different words. For the purpose of control and contrast he tested pupils in two privileged areas, but found little significant difference.

### *The Present Study*

It was decided to use the English Recognition Vocabulary Test, Form 1 by Seashore and

Eckerson to test vocabulary knowledge of fifty seventh-graders consisting of 25 boys and an equal number of girls. The Burns School, Detroit, Michigan was chosen because it was attended by middle-class children, and because it was convenient and accessible for the administration of the test. The children were of average intelligence, ranging in chronological age from twelve years to thirteen years and eight months. No child was excessively advanced or retarded in school for his years.

Immediately surrounding the school is an all white, predominantly middle-class neighborhood composed of single homes. Some of the children tested live in this neighborhood; the others come to school by bus from a district situated northwest of the school. The bus area is similar in socio-economic level to that immediately surrounding the school except that it has been more recently developed as a residence section. The parents of both groups of children are engaged mainly in skilled occupations and in white-collar jobs.

The procedure followed in the administration of the test was almost identical to that used by M. K. Smith and described by her in her report. (19) According to her recommendations pupils in the later elementary grades are deemed to require only opening directions and occasional supervision and aid in reading. The children were told that the test was for the purpose of finding out how many words pupils in elementary schools and high-schools really knew. They were assured that the results would have no bearing on their grades. The explanation offered to the children for the fact that the words began easy and became quite difficult was that the same test had been used from first-grade through college. The boys and girls were cautioned to proceed carefully, and were told that it was a good idea to guess if they thought they could make a good guess. On the other hand, if the pupils had no idea of the meaning of a word, they were advised to omit it.

The children were permitted to have any word pronounced for them. Few asked to have words on the first three pages pronounced. In cases where the word was pronounced the investigator noticed that rarely were the children then able to select the proper meaning simply as a result of hearing the word pronounced. The tester moved among the children, making certain that they followed directions carefully, and gave them the opportunity to ask questions. After a few of the pupils had finished Part 1 or the multiple-choice part of the test, the attention of the entire group was obtained. It was then explained that the words listed in Parts 2 and 3 of the test required full explanations of the terms listed. The students were told to "tell enough so that someone else can understand just what you mean," and to "write the meanings for as many of the words as you can."

Few of the children spent much time on Parts 2 and 3. The experience of working on Part 1 seemed to have tired many of them, and furthermore Parts 2 and 3 proved most discouraging. Part 2 contained rare words or

names of places and people; Part 3 was composed of compound and technical terms. Both required written explanations or complete definitions. None of the children taking the test received any credit for knowing words listed in Part 2. This is not surprising, in view of the fact that the words included and listed separately in Part 2 were those which Seashore found college students unable to answer.

The test was scored in accordance with the testing manual, and a correction factor was applied to compensate for guessing. Scores on Part 1 of the test represent the number of basic words known by the children. Part 3 scores indicate the number of derived terms known, and these were added to the scores obtained on Part 1. The resulting sum represents the total English recognition vocabulary for the seventh-grade group. The accompanying table indicates the average number of words known by the fifty seventh-graders tested, and also shows the results reported by Smith for pupils of the same grade level.

Group	Size of Vocabulary		
	Basic Words	Derived Terms	Total Words
Colvin's Seventh-Grader's	33,461	9,885	43,346
Smith's Seventh-Grader's	35,000	20,000	55,000

Little difference can be noted between the number of basic words known by the two groups, although there is a striking difference between the number of derived terms defined by the two groups. This may have resulted from the method of administering or of scoring that part of the test. It is possible that the children

did not attempt as many of the terms as they were able to define. They appeared to require more encouragement and a more detailed explanation of how to define a term. However, this procedure had not been recommended by Smith, and therefore was not used in the present study.

The boys taking the test scored slightly higher than the girls, both on basic and derived terms, but the differences are not conclusive because of the limited number of cases studied. The pupils in the first half of the seventh year scored lower than those in the second half of the grade, as might be expected, but again the sample is too small for purposes of generalization.

A small but fairly consistent relationship appeared to exist between intelligence rating and size of vocabulary. Children of slightly higher than average intelligence knew more words than did children of average and slightly below average intelligence. Children with very low intelligence ratings had previously been excluded from the sample.

A crude index of parent's occupations was employed to identify roughly each child's socioeconomic status. The pupils were classified according to whether the parent's occupations was of a semi-skilled, skilled, or white collar or supervisory nature. Those whose fathers were employed in skilled occupations scored higher than the children whose fathers were semi-skilled workers, and the children of white collar or supervisory workers obtained the highest scores.

### *The Type of Vocabulary Measured*

As has been shown in the summaries presented and in the present study, the great disparities in a child's speaking, reading, writing, and spelling vocabulary make the task of measuring the vocabulary of children complicated and confusing. The failure of some studies to define adequately which vocabulary is being investigated has led to false and unreliable conclusions. Few educators would question that the acquisition by the child of a reading vocabulary invariably lags behind his speaking vocabulary during the first years of school, and that the acquisition of a writing vocabulary comes after the ability to read that vocabulary has been established. Writing vocabularies of chil-

dren are generally conceded to be smaller in size than are reading or oral vocabularies.

It is difficult to compare the results obtained by oral and written testing procedures, because each procedure measures a different type of vocabulary. In attempting to find the size of recognition vocabulary, the Seashore-Eckerson test administered orally by Smith in the first four grades, and both orally and as a written test in the next two grades, probably does not accurately measure recognition vocabulary for those levels. However, at the seventh-grade level, pupils are able to take the test without undue supplementary reading by the administrator, and the results obtained may be regarded as indicative of size of recognition vocabulary. It should be pointed out that Smith, in measuring vocabulary in Grades I-VI, reported results for children's auditory and not for recognition vocabulary. Therefore, her estimates for elementary school children cited by Seashore cannot be employed, nor are they designed to be employed for the purpose of indicating reading ability. However, the fact that the estimates have a decided significance for the reading program cannot be overlooked.

The question of whether oral, written, or reading vocabulary had been measured did not arise in the present study, because seventh-grade students were able to read the words on the test. It appears probable, however, that the size of the results obtained were controlled directly by the size of the Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary from which the English Recognition Vocabulary Test had been obtained. If a list of words representing a sample from a dictionary of different magnitude had been employed, it might be presumed that the results would have been in accord with the size of the dictionary. Considering that children in today's world learn many words not to be found in published frequency lists, it appears that their word knowledge should be measured in terms of the words actually known, and not in terms of words educators think they know. For this



reliance on extensive word lists such as unabridged dictionaries are preferable to selected and limited word lists for the purpose of preparing tests designed to measure vocabulary.

The early studies of Babbitt, Burch, and Gerland, and the later ones of Seashore and Hartmann point out the extent to which vocabularies of college students have been underestimated previously. Obviously some definite pattern of vocabulary growth takes place between the time the student enters school the first day and the time he goes to college. The figures presented by Smith for elementary school children appear to be in accord with estimates for college undergraduates. The number of words known by the seventh-graders in the present study did not differ greatly from the Smith-Seashore results. These findings, though not conclusive, indicate the earlier vocabulary studies probably underestimated the extent of children's vocabularies.

#### *Methods of Testing*

Each of the investigations discussed used one of three methods of estimating size of recognition vocabulary. The three methods are (1) the free-association test, (2) counting the words in children's writings, and (3) sampling the dictionary. The dictionary sampling method employed in most of the investigations is one of the fundamental procedures of scientific experimentation, and is probably most valid.

There are many criteria for determining if a word is known. These include the ability (1) to define a word, (2) to use a word in an illustrative situation or sentence, (3) to recognize an illustration of a word, (4) to use the word to name a situation, (5) to recognize a common meaning of a word from among several definitions, or merely to require checking whether or not the word is known or familiar. The findings show that a test in which children identify a common meaning of a word from several choices results in a larger score than one requiring written definitions.

A pupil whose superficial knowledge of a word would be sufficient for credit on a multiple-choice test might not know the word well enough to define it adequately. Probably the most accurate procedure is to require definitions of words. For children definitions need not be complicated nor complete.

#### *The Children Themselves*

The composition of the groups for whom vocabulary size is reported has a marked bearing on the significance of the results. The findings for a superior socio-economic group cannot be applied to other segments of the population, nor are they representative of other groups from varying socio-economic levels. Far too many of the investigations summarized failed to present objective information concerning the subjects participating. For this reason the results obtained in these investigations cannot be interpreted precisely. Also, it is of questionable value to estimate scores for elementary school children from the vocabulary scores of college students, since only a limited proportion of elementary pupils go on to college.

#### *The Development of Vocabulary*

There are many opportunities for additional research in the area of measuring vocabulary and of developing vocabulary in children. More study on methods of increasing vocabulary size is needed. The factors which tend to produce extensive vocabularies need to be isolated before they can be put to work to produce intelligent citizens who will possess verbal and reading abilities.

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# Look and Listen

Edited by RAOUL R. HAAS<sup>1</sup>

Of *Radio, Television, and Society*,<sup>2</sup> by Charles A. Siepmann, Ernest O. Melby says: "This book is 'must' reading for all who influence public thought and action through teaching, writing, or speaking by way of our mass media." As teachers we have an *obligation* to influence public thought and action. We have, for some years now, been inclined to take radio for granted. And more recently, we have fumed about the time our students spend viewing television, but have begun to look upon this newest medium as merely another disruptive force in our class room routine and to ignore it wherever possible. It is easier this way.

Yet perhaps no more pervasive force than radio and television exists in American life today. Mr. Siepmann's is the first book to deal comprehensively with radio in its relation to the American scene.

The first half of *Radio, Television, and Society* reviews the history of broadcasting in the United States, surveys what is known of its effects on the outlook and behavior of listeners and describes the systems under which it operates here and abroad. The British Broadcasting Corporation receives a detailed analysis and critique—an undertaking for which the author is well qualified by wide experience with both U. S. and British systems, and in which he makes it clear that like our own, the latter has defects as well as virtues. Considerable space is also given to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which combines features of both.

The second half of the book, using radio as a frame of reference, explores the place of propaganda in the modern world, the issue of free speech, the position of education with relation to mass media and the war of words via international shortwave broadcasts. Through-

out, the author makes frequent reference to the films and other media of mass communication, and he closes with an appraisal of television: How will it affect us? Is it an art? Will it ruin radio and bankrupt the film industry?

Of particular interest and value are the texts of official rulings, court decisions and other documentary material included in an appendix. The book is illustrated with six maps and charts.

## Radio

Establishment of a nationwide educational project designed to show how people solve community problems at the local level with a minimum of outside help was announced recently by Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, president of the Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pennsylvania, and chairman of the national committee created to advise and assist in the program.

The project will be known as "The People Act" and will feature a series of weekly broadcasts over the CBS Radio Network beginning in November. It is made possible by a grant from the Fund for Adult Education and, according to Dr. Eisenhower, will be part of the Fund's basic program for strengthening the processes of democracy.

"In every part of the United States," Dr. Eisenhower explained, "people are bringing about amazing improvements in their conditions of life through teamwork at the local level. With the help of this program, we hope to encourage this sort of practical democracy by showing Americans everywhere what they

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Haas is Director, the North Side Branch, Chicago Teachers College.

<sup>2</sup>New York: Oxford University Press, 1950. \$4.75.

can do to improve the way of life in their own communities."

The CBS Radio series will present each week a dramatic tape-recorded story of how people are solving pressing local problems, using the voices of the actual people involved. The stories will be drawn from rural and urban areas throughout the United States and will be selected in terms of the freshness and vitality with which they deal with characteristic social, economic or civic problems. Appeals from listeners for help or guidance on similar or related problems will be referred to counselors in the area from which the inquiry comes.

• The New York Philharmonic-Symphony, which has been heard for 21 consecutive seasons of Sunday radio concerts was named the favorite symphony orchestra on the air in *Musical America's* eighth annual poll of 850 music critics and editors of daily newspapers in the United States and Canada.

Contemporary music and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony were recognized together in an award to Dimitri Mitropoulos' performance of Alban Berg's "Wozzeck" as the best new work broadcast this year. Bruno Walter, guest conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, was voted the best guest conductor of a symphonic program.

### Film Guides

The eleventh annual edition of the *Educators Guide to Free Films* is now available from the Educators Progress Service, Randolph, Wisconsin. The new price of this volume is \$6.00. For effective use of this guide, previous editions are obsolete and should be discarded.

The 1951 edition lists 2,121 titles, of which 444 are new. Films withdrawn during the year have been deleted as well as those which failed to meet reasonably adequate availability and distribution requirements.

Included in this edition is another in the series of articles by Dean John Guy Fowlkes,

"The Sponsored Film—A Report on American Production." Reprints of Dr. Fowlkes' report may be had free upon request to the publisher.

Also available is the third annual edition of the *Educators Guide to Free Slidefilms*. The price of this guide remains at \$3.00. 504 titles are listed, of which 152 were not listed in the 1950 edition; 30% of the titles are new.

"Look and Listen" again recommends these volumes for purchase by schools. It is believed they will be of value to the teacher interested in employing audio-visual materials but whose budget is limited. A careful study of the listings indicates that one cannot depend entirely on free or inexpensive materials for an adequate audio-visual instructional program. However, there are many films listed in these guides which are not available except through public and private agencies.

• A plan by which owners of Encyclopaedia Britannica Films' productions may exchange old prints for new if developments in the subject area call for revision of that film was announced recently by Walter Colmes, EBF president, and Dennis Williams, vice-president in charge of distribution.

Under the new policy, any customer will be allowed to exchange old prints of any film which has been revised for prints of the new edition at a cost of only \$16.00 each. The plan was formulated, Colmes and Williams said, to assure every EBF customer that his library would have films containing all the latest developments and techniques. Such a plan is particularly necessary now, they said, because science is making such rapid advances in some fields. They pointed out that all EBF productions are constantly being reviewed to make sure they are abreast of all new developments and techniques.

In the past few months revisions have been produced for the following titles: *Electrostatics*, *Fundamentals of Acoustics*, *Sound Waves and*



*Their Sources, Irrigation Farming, Tuberculosis, Safety in the Home*, and minor revisions made in *Arteries of the City, Using the Bank*, and *The Frog*.

Any person or organization owning the original edition of these titles who wishes to exchange them for the revised version should send old prints to Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois, with an order for new and revised prints.

### **Instructional Films**

The late spring and summer brings news from the producers of a wide variety of new instructional films. Among these, the following would appear to have interest.

#### ● Art and Music

1. *Color Keying in Art and Living*, one reel, color, 16mm, (\$100), is intended for junior and senior high school classes in art, art appreciation, and home economics, and for adult groups. It is based upon a script by the well-known American teacher of water color painting, Eliot O'Hara, N. A., who was also collaborator for the film. The technical aspects of color, the use of color in painting and in everyday life—costume, home decoration and personal charm—are demonstrated. The picture employs abstract demonstrations of color deceptions and practical applications of these deceptions to provide a study of color and related phenomena as applied to light pigments.

2. *Rhythm — Instruments and Movements*, one reel, 16mm, b&w, (\$50.) Intended for primary grade music and physical education classes, the collaborator is Miss Elizabeth Waterman, author of *The Rhythm Book*.

The film is designed to present basic concepts of rhythm to the elementary school child and to explain how a well-developed sense of rhythm contributes to a fuller enjoyment of living. The film opens with an Indian chief presenting a second grade class with a native drum. He explains to the children how his

drum may be used in many ways to express what he feels, and he demonstrates several Indian dances done to different rhythms of the drum-beat. The children experiment with the drum and then decide they would like to collect other percussion instruments. They bring their instruments to class and form an orchestra. The children are then shown making their own instruments from oatmeal boxes, tin cans, pot covers, brake drums and other resonant metals. The Indian chief returns and the children put on a performance for him, using their own instruments and rhythms which they have created.

Both films are available for purchase or rental through Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, 1150 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois, or their regional offices.

#### ● Science

1. *Field Trip to a Fish Hatchery*, one reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50). Coronet Films. A class takes a film field trip to a fish hatchery. They discover the answers to the following: Why do we have fish hatcheries? What do they look like? What happens there? How do fish live? In this interesting film, one sees fish eggs taken from the female, fertilized, hatched, and developed from fry into fingerlings. Important details about the structure of fish and how fish are planted in streams and lakes are also included. An excellent study in field trip techniques, conservation, biological science and reading background, this film is intended for intermediate grades and junior and senior high school. The educational collaborator is N. E. Bingham, Professor of Education, University of Florida.

2. *Seashore Life*, one reel, color (\$100). Encyclopaedia Britannica Films. Life on the three general types of seashore—the sandy beach, the rock pool, and the mud flat—and the adaptability and interrelation of representative plants and animals living with such an environment are revealed. The film opens with a brief photographic exploration of sand and rock

beaches. Several representative animals are observed as they busily search for food and shelter. A horseshoe crab begins to dig his way into the sand to avoid the drying effect of the wind while the tide is out. The camera next shows a broad, tidal mud flat. A heron is seen wading in shallow water while a crab moves rapidly along in search of food among the debris washed up by the tide. A close observation of the next locale, the rocky pool, reveals barnacles growing on the rocks, and starfish are seen crawling over a mussel bed. One of the starfish is growing a new arm. Various kinds of crab are in action and one is feeding on the remains of a dead sea urchin. In waters adjacent to the pool, seaweed forms an underwater forest in which many interesting kinds of life exist in the same living community. The film closes with a review of the major kinds of shore locales.

Intended for use in primary and intermediate science classes, *Seashore Life* was filmed primarily at Boothbay Harbor and adjacent regions of the Maine coast. Collaborator is George L. Clarke, Associate Professor of Zoology at Harvard.

3. *Pond Life*, also intended for use in primary and intermediate grade science classes, one reel, b&w (\$50), serves both as a nature study lesson, identifying certain animals and plants, and as an illustration of the perpetual cycle of life which is the result of the ecological pattern existing in an organized pond community.

The film opens on what appears to be a quiet summer afternoon. However, the camera shows that there is a great deal of life above and around the pond. A red-winged blackbird, a dragonfly and a turtle in search of food are all busy. Insects which live on the surface of the water—water spiders and whirligigs—those which live just below the surface, such as mosquito larvae and waterbugs, and those which live down deep in the pond are shown as they go about their daily activities. A diving beetle

is followed as he dives to the bottom of the pond where other animals like the spotted salamander, crayfish and mussels have their homes. All through the pond there are a great many animals, sunfish, minnows, bass and catfish swimming freely in the pond. In subsequent scenes, the reasons why all these pond animals are able to live together are revealed.

#### ● Social Studies

1. Intended for intermediate grade and junior high school geography and social studies classes is a 16mm one reel, color film (\$100), *Fur Trapper of the North*. W. J. Hamilton, Jr., Professor of Zoology at Cornell University, acted as educational collaborator for EBFilms.

The life of the fur trapper in the northern wilds, his preparation for the annual trapping season and the disposition of the pelts at the end of the season is shown. The film provides a study of the life and activities of the people who secure clothes for our use as well as a study of the clothing problem.

2. For junior and senior high schools and adult groups is *Geography of New England*, one reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50), produced by Coronet with Thomas Frank Barton, Associate Professor of Geography, Indiana University, serving as educational collaborator.

The region of New England is more than a physical area; it is a network of relationships between people and places; activities and resources. Effects of glaciation on the whole area, development of specialized industries, distribution of population and an accurate picture of the economy and culture of the area are all presented in a clear and understandable manner.

3. A study of the geography and social problems of the new republic of Indonesia and of the natural resources and agricultural practices of the area are portrayed in *Bali Today*, one reel, color (\$100). EBFilms. Dr. Clarence W. Sorensen of Illinois State Normal University served as educational collaborator.

# The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS<sup>1</sup>

According to Dr. Elizabeth Pilant (in her article, "American Folklore for Remedial Reading," in the April, 1951 *English Journal*) folklore is "natural" reading material for retarded readers. She points out that folklore has the basic requirements of being of low difficulty and of high interest levels. As primarily oral literature it possesses in abundance those qualities which make for low reading difficulty and high reading motivation: anecdotes, talks, dialogue, conversation, verbal exchange, vigorous folk speech, colloquial quality, short, simple, declarative sentences and sentence fragments. The plot is usually simple, action-packed, develops swiftly, and the characterization is strong.

Remedial reading is aided in effectiveness by being optimistic in tone and good-naturedly humorous. Both of these qualities are found in folklore. Drawing an analogy from learning a foreign language, Dr. Pilant points out, also, that most of the stories in beginning foreign language work are drawn from folklore. The retarded pupils in English reading are having difficulty not too unlike the person learning a new language. Should the reading materials, then, be unlike each other?

The National Conference American Folklore for Youth has bibliographies and materials dealing with American folklore, available without cost. Teachers desiring to obtain materials for use with either retarded or regular classes may write to the Conference, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana.



Teachers may find "A Modern Viewpoint on the Spelling Vocabulary," by Gertrude Hildreth, in the April, 1951 *Education Digest* (quoted from the January, 1951 *Elementary*

*School Journal*) helpful in achieving a functional attitude toward the place of spelling in the elementary curriculum. Dr. Hildreth clearly shows that spelling is a tool to effective expression by this statement: "...Automatic command of spelling enables one to concentrate on the wording of the ideas expressed." She then goes on to an analysis of the reason for the discrepancy in the spelling of everyday words (usually spelled correctly) and words listed in the spelling lessons by pupils. She finds that there are two causes for this inconsistency: (1) the isolated way in which spelling is taught in most schools, and (2) the inclusion of many infrequently used and unfamiliar words in spelling lists for elementary school pupils.

Noah Webster's *Blue Back Speller*, based on the words of adult literary usage, set the stage for present spelling lists. Words were included because they were hard to spell rather than because they were necessary for effective written communication. Preparation for eventual spelling needs as adults, concentrated because of the early departure from school, and the formal discipline concept in learning added considerable numbers of relatively useless words to the spelling lists.

The trend in the opposite direction was begun by the word frequency listers. These researchers found that relatively few words constitute the bulk of words used in writing: "A hundred words take care of over half of our writing needs even in adult life, and 1000 words do about 90 percent of the work."

With this background Dr. Hildreth outlines a workable philosophy for the teaching of spelling:

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Jenkins is a teacher of English in the Moline, Ill., Public Schools.

1. Teach from the "child-use" rather than from the "cold-storage" principle. "...It is impossible to predict with any high degree of certainty just which words among some 30,000, beyond the first 2000 or so, a child will most need to spell as an adult... unless the largest share of the child's time in spelling is devoted to child-use words, he will be left short in attempting to do written work on an elementary school child's level... within child-use words the pupil has ample material for learning to spell, for gaining genuine spelling power, for learning how to study a word so as to master it, for helping himself to word analysis..."

2. "All the essential spelling principles and habits can be learned by children through instruction with familiar, common-use words." This includes proofreading all written material, changing word forms, pronunciation, sounding, and syllabication.

3. The child-use position is based on children's needs. That is, the child begins early to write for real purposes.

4. Enlarging of vocabularies should come through the increasing of the stock of word meanings.

5. Adult usage vocabularies are gained by most people by analogy gained through spelling lessons, writing, and reading. However, the teacher can perform these functions: "Teach special vocabularies as occasion arises... Teach students how to locate doubtful spelling and motivate them to do so..." Point out the uses and stimulate the use of the dictionary, lists of spelling "demons," and reference sources.



Modern schoolrooms are being equipped with books and other materials that enable pupils to plan for things to do alone or with others when regular work is done. In some classes the boys and girls together make up lists of things to do next. These activities may be art work, construction or experimentation that carry forward the on-going enterprises or

be in the nature of individual projects, large or small. "They should be original, creative, challenging—never aimless busy work," says Dr. Effie Bathurst, U. S. Office of Education.

With leather, clay, metal, wood, paper, scrap-bag pieces, odds and ends of ribbon, lace, and other waste materials, and nature materials, some children can make articles useful in school or home, such as woven or braided mats or rugs, purses, book and letter racks, doll dresses. Suggestions for household articles, puzzles, collections, games, codes, secret messages, and tricks are intriguing to many children. Some like to keep diaries and to correspond with friends in other places. Others write rhymes, poems, and stories. Here are interesting books to help children learn during their leisure moments:

Barton, Fred B. *Music as a Hobby*. New York: Harper and Bros., 1950. 159p. How to have fun with music as a performer and listener.

Carlson, Bernice Wells. *Make It Yourself*. New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press., 1950. 160p. Good for children who like to do things in free time by themselves and with others—things out of paper, vegetables, nature materials, scrapbag materials, and other things.

Crampton, Gertrude. *The Golden Funny Book*. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1950. 76p. illus. Rainy day activities for young children.

Dow, Emily R. *What Can I Do?* New York: Aladdin Books of American Book Company, 1950. 127p. Games and handwork for indoors, outdoors, alone or in groups. Puzzles, things to make, draw, or collect.

Furness, Frank. *Funny Riddles and Rhymes for Boys and Girls*. New York: Hart Publishing Company, 1950. 95p. Fun for children in school, home, or camp. Has answers to riddles included. Cartoons interesting and suggestive to children who like to draw them.



Newkirk, Louis V., and Zutter, LaVada. *You Can Make It*. New York: Silver-Burdett, 1944. 214p. A book addressed to children suggesting a great variety of interesting recreational activities.

Schloat, G. Warren, Jr. *What Shall I Do?* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. Unpaged. Things to build, tricks, games, and other things for free time. Interestingly illustrated for children.

Weaver, Robert W., and Merrill, Anthony F. *Camping Can Be Fun*. New York: Harper and Bros., 1948. 241p. Tells how young people can plan camping trips to national parks, forests, and similar places. Includes camp shelters and how to make them.

Zim, Herbert S. *Codes and Secret Writing*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1948. 154p. A book for folks who like to have fun with codes and ciphers. Discusses chemicals and other means of disguising messages.



*Your Neighbor Celebrates* may be useful to teachers in communities with large Hebrew populations. This small booklet tells the history of most of the Jewish holidays, in prose, poetry, and song, and makes suggestions for field trips to synagogues or temples. In areas where field trips such as these are not possible a motion picture with the same title may be obtained. The film, as well as a kit of religious objects, and the pamphlet may be secured from the Department of Interreligious Cooperation of the Anti-Defamation League, 327 South LaSalle, Chicago 4. The pamphlet costs ten cents per copy.



We wish to correct the following error which was made in the April, 1951 issue, Review and Criticism section: The review of *Interlingua-English: A Dictionary of the International Language* erroneously stated that the

dictionary was authored by Alexander Gode. Mr. Gode was editor of the dictionary which was compiled by a staff of members of the International Auxiliary Language Association.



"Some of the Best Illinois High School Prose of 1950," the Feb., 1951 issue of the *Illinois English Bulletin*, may be of inspiration to pupils struggling in their composition classes to write better and heartening for their teachers who feel that the pupils will never learn to communicate effectively. For both groups diversity of ideas and range of emotions displayed will prove striking.

Teachers wishing to obtain a copy of this issue of the *Bulletin* should write to 121 Lincoln Hall, Urbana, Ill. Single copies cost twenty-five cents.



The following materials may answer teachers' problems in particular areas of their work with children:

*Children in the Family: Rivals and Friends*, By Edith G. Neisser. Parent-Teachers Series. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. Price sixty cents.

A discussion of the causes of rivalry and how to build friendships among the young members of the family group.

*Free and Inexpensive Materials on World Affairs*, by Leonard S. Kenworthy. Order from the author at Brooklyn College. Price one dollar.

A listing of materials that cost one dollar or less (most of the items cost twenty-five cents or less) which may be of use to teachers who are too busy to ferret out all of the materials in this critical learning area. The majority of the items are for high school but a large number are suitable for use with elementary classes.

*Developing World-Minded Children*, by Leonard S. Kenworthy. Price thirty cents.

A companion piece to the pamphlet listed above, designed specifically for the elementary grades. Includes general as well as free and inexpensive materials.

*Helping Young Children to Work Independently*, by Mary Bressler and Lilian Moore. Bureau of Educational Research, Board of Education, New York City.

A booklet designed to aid teachers to interpret in everyday practice the philosophy and suggestions of a 1947 pamphlet titled "Helping Our Young Children to Learn." The pamphlet discusses painting, blockbuilding, house-play, work materials and reading groups, and other independent activities. The pamphlet is not listed for sale but interested persons may be able to secure a copy by writing to the Board of Education of the City of New York.

*Exploring Children's Interests*, by G. F. Kuder and B. B. Paulson. Science Research Associates, 57 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 10. Price forty cents.

Includes a definition of *interest*, and discusses the idea, the discovery, the use, and the fostering of children's interests, and the implications of these concepts around the term for parents and teachers.

*Better Reading Books*, by Elizabeth A.

Simpson. Research Associates, 57 West Grand Ave., Chicago 10. Price \$1.55.

A set of books each of which includes twenty carefully chosen graded articles on which the pupil measures his reading rate, twenty tests through which to measure reading comprehension, and twenty suggestions by which the student tries to improve his reading rate and comprehension. The set of four books have been prepared for grades 5-6, 7-8.9, 9-10, and 11-13. The Instructors Guide and the Reading Progress Folder for Students to accompany the books must be purchased separately.



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of October, 1951:

For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *The Blue-Eyed Pussy*, by Egon Mathiesen. Doubleday, \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10 and 11 years of age: *The Ghost Hollow Mystery*, by Page Carter. Lippincott, \$2.00.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Behold Your Queen!* by Gladys Malvern. Longmans, Green, \$2.50.

For older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Unwilling Pirate*, by West Lathrop. Random House, \$2.75.

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#### FORTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

HOTEL SHERATON-GIBSON, CINCINNATI

NOVEMBER 20-24, 1951

CONVENTION THEME: ENGLISH AND HUMAN PERSONALITY

Partial Program

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 9:30 A.M.-10:00 P.M.

## THE EDUCATIONAL SCENE

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### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM, 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 7:30 P.M.

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22

CONTINUOUS EXHIBIT OF MATERIAL AND AIDS FOR TEACHING

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 9:30 A.M.-3:00 P. M.

*(All members of the Council are invited to attend as auditors)*

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 3:15-4:15 P.M.

*(All members of the Council participate in this meeting)*

RECEPTION FOR MEMBERS, 4:45-5:30 P.M.

GENERAL SESSION, 8:00-10:00 P.M.

*Presiding*, Ruth G. Strickland, Indiana University; Second Vice-President of the Council

*Invocation*—Rabbi Victor E. Reichert, Rockdale Temple, Cincinnati

*Welcome*—Dr. Claude V. Courter, Superintendent of Schools, Cincinnati

*President's Address*: "And This Our Life"—Paul Farmer, Atlanta, Georgia, Public Schools

*Preparing for Our Jobs*—Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University; First

Vice-President of the Council

*Human Relations and World Peace*—Max Lerner, Columnist, *New York Post*; Author and Lecturer

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23

GENERAL SESSION, 9:15-11:00 A.M.

*Presiding*, Paul Farmer, Atlanta, Georgia, Public Schools; President of the Council

*Significance of Language and Literature for Growth and Personality*—Willard C. Olson,

Director of Research in Child Development, University of Michigan

*New Bottles for New Wine*—Lou LaBrant, School of Education, New York University

LUNCHEON SESSIONS, 12:00

I. *Books for Children: A Luncheon for Librarians and Teachers in Elementary and Secondary Schools*

*Presiding*, Angela Broening, Bureau of Measurement, Statistics, and Research, Baltimore Public Schools

*Introduction of Speaker*, Hardy R. Finch, Greenwich, Connecticut, High School

*Speaker*, Munro Leaf, Author of *Ferdinand the Bull*, *Wee Gillis*, and other books for children

FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONFERENCES

*General Topic*: RELATING ENGLISH TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHOLESOME PERSONALITY

## ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

FIRST SERIES, 2:15-3:30 P.M.

## IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEMS

1. *Problems and Methods of Research in Language and Personality Development*  
*Presiding*, David H. Russell, University of California, Berkeley

Studies of Language and Personality Development—Dorothea McCarthy, Fordham University

Studies of the Group Life of Boys and Girls—Ruth Cunningham, Teachers College, Columbia University

Studies of Reading Problems and Personality Development—Emmett A. Betts, Temple University

2. *Developing a Personal Philosophy of Life in a World of Conflicting Values*  
*Presiding*, C. Wayne Hall, McGill University, Quebec

The English Teacher Teaches Philosophy—Thomas Clark Pollock, New York University

The Impact of Culture on Personality—Hilda Taba, University of Chicago

Developing Spiritual Values in Public Education—John W. Ashton, Indiana University

3. *Bibliotherapy: Personality Adjustment through Reading*

*Presiding*, Nathan A. Miller, Psychological Services, Miami, Florida

Reading To Meet Emotional Needs—Paul A. Witty, Northwestern University

The Librarian Guides Reading—Frieda Heller, Ohio State University

The Function of Bibliotherapy in Psychotherapy—Maurice Levine, Department of Psychiatry, College of Medicine, University of Cincinnati

4. *Meeting Individual Needs through a Balanced Language Program*

*Presiding*, Muriel Crosby, Director of Elementary Education, Wilmington, Delaware

Balancing Impression and Expression in the Language Program—Mabel F. Rice, Whittier College, California

Understanding Children through Creative Writing—

An Individual Reading Program for Underprivileged Children—Doris K. Coburn, Charles Sumner Junior High School, New York City

5. *Understanding the Role of Language in Group Relationships*

*Presiding*, Irwin J. Suloway, Chicago Teachers College

Implications of Group Dynamics for the Language Arts Program—John J. De Boer, University of Illinois

Language in Intergroup Relationships—E. Louise Noyes, Santa Barbara High School, California

Sociodrama and Psychodrama as Part of the Language Program—



6. *Studying the Psychological Implications of the Use of Mass Media of Communication Presiding,*

Radio and the Development of Maturity—

Motion Pictures and Concepts of Reality—

Educational Values of Television—

SECOND SERIES, 3:45-5:00 P.M.

DISCOVERING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS

1. *How Can Children's Language Needs Be Met in Overcrowded Classrooms?*

*Discussion leader*, Grace Rawlings, School No. 64, Baltimore

*Resource People:*

Elizabeth Guilfoile, Twelfth District School, Cincinnati

May Lazar, New York City Public Schools

Margaret Mercille, University School, Bloomington, Indiana

Lillian C. Paukner, Curriculum Director, Milwaukee

Blanche Trezevant, Florida State University

Eugene Hunter, Women's College, University of North Carolina

Margaret McKim, Department of Education, University of Cincinnati

Miriam Wilt, Teachers College, Temple University, Philadelphia

Doris Holmes, Elementary School Supervisor, Indianapolis

2. *How Can Children Who Are Linguistically Handicapped Be Helped To Communicate?*

*Discussion leader*, Mary I. Cole, State Teachers College, Bowling Green, Kentucky

*Resource People:*

Alvina Treut Burrows, New York University

Lawrence Hawkins, Twelfth District School, Cincinnati

Daisy M. Jones, Public Schools, Richmond, Indiana

Dorothy White, Public Schools, Detroit

Harlen M. Adams, Chico State College, California

Vivien Beamon, Jackson School, Cincinnati

Helen Breel, Brooklyn College

Gunnar Horn, Benson High School, Omaha

Elaine Lewis Morrel, Austin High School, El Paso

Olive Young, Southwest High School, Minneapolis

3. *How Can Teachers Interpret to Parents the Effects of the School Program on Personality Development?*

*Discussion leader*, Helen K. Mackintosh, United States Office of Education

*Resource People:*

Millie Almy, University of Cincinnati  
 Irene L. Dresser, Maine State Department of Education  
 Bernice Freeman, Troupe County Schools, La Grange, Georgia  
 Hannah M. Lindahl, Public Schools, Mishawaka, Indiana  
 Helen Hanlon, Detroit Public Schools  
 Fannie J. Ragland, Cincinnati Public Schools  
 Esther Starks, University School, Athens, Ohio  
 LaVerne Strong, Connecticut State Department of Education  
 Verna Walters, Kent University  
 Lillian A. Wilcox, Buffalo Public Schools

4. *How Can Community Resources Be Utilized To Aid in the Program of Language Development?*

*Discussion leader*, Enoch Dumas, University of California, Berkeley

*Resource People:*

Althea Beery, Cincinnati Public Schools  
 Naomi Chase, Seattle Public Schools  
 Eddie C. Kennedy, Glenville State College, West Virginia  
 Constance McCullough, San Francisco State College  
 Tommie Barnes, Tulsa Public Schools  
 Aldean Wesebaum, Detroit Public Schools  
 Edward J. Gordon, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia  
 Marion Zollinger, Portland, Oregon, Public Schools

5. *What In-Service Help Does the Elementary Teacher Need To Improve Children's Language Development?*

*Discussion leader*, George H. Beauchamp, University School, Athens, Ohio

*Resource People:*

Mildred A. Dawson, State Teachers College, Fredonia, New York  
 Leland Jacobs, The Ohio State University  
 Alma Stegall, Virginia State College  
 Cecilia Unzicker, Cincinnati Public Schools  
 O. G. Pruitt, Banks County Schools, Homer, Georgia  
 Angela M. Broening, Baltimore Public Schools  
 Marion Edman, Wayne University  
 Marion R. Trabue, Pennsylvania State College  
 Kate V. Wofford, University of Florida

6. *Television and Reading—How Can Teachers Meet the Challenge?*

*Discussion leader*, Grace M. Dreier, Los Angeles Public Schools

*Resource People:*

Robert Doxtator, Shortridge High School, Indianapolis

Inez Frost, Hutchinson, Kansas, Junior College  
George E. Murphy, Pennsylvania State College  
Viola Theman, Northwestern University  
Ruth Tooze, Children's Book Shelf, Michigan City, Indiana  
Sister Mary Evelyn, R. S. M., Mercy High School, Chicago  
George Johnson, Indiana University  
Walter Brownsword, Providence, Rhode Island, Public Schools  
Margaret M. Clark, Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library

*7. What Are the Strengths and Weaknesses of Combined Courses in English and Social Studies for Seventh-and Eighth-Grade Boys and Girls?*

*Discussion leader*, Ingrid Strom, University High School, Bloomington, Indiana

*Resource People:*

Frank Albright, Gary, Indiana, High School  
Evelyn Damon, John Burroughs School, St. Louis  
Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University  
Robert Rounds, Oneonta State Teachers College, New York  
Mabel F. Rice, Whittier College, California  
Harold A. Anderson, University of Chicago  
Kenneth Schall, Junior High School, Detroit  
Alma Barker, Macfarland Junior High School, Washington, D. C.  
Frances Hueston, Deering High School, Portland, Maine  
Margarete Teer, Laboratory School, Louisiana State University

*8. How Can the Tape Recorder Be Used in the English Program?*

*Discussion leader*, Robert Herreid, Beloit, Wisconsin, High School

*Resource People:*

Hardy R. Finch, Greenwich, Connecticut, High School  
Lois Anne Dille, West High School, Rockford, Illinois  
Susie B. Niles, Salt Lake City Public Schools  
Thelma McAndless, Roosevelt High School, Ypsilanti, Michigan  
Bonita Westland, Ferndale High School, Ferndale, Michigan  
Clifton Mitchell, Little River High School, Miami  
Charlton G. Laird, University of Nevada  
Margaret Painter, Modesto, California, Public Schools

ANNUAL DINNER, 7:00 P.M.

*Toastmaster*, Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin

The Fortieth Anniversary of the Council—W. Wilbur Hatfield, Editor of the *English Journal* and *College English*; Secretary-Treasurer of the Council  
(Speaker to be announced)

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Topic: Language Arts for a Healthy Personality

General Meeting, 9:30-10:45 A. M.

Presiding, Hannah M. Lindahl, Mishawaka, Indiana; Chairman of the Elementary Section of the Council

Reading and the Healthy Personality—David H. Russell, School of Education, University of California

Creative Writing: Its Therapeutic Values—Alvina Treut Burrows, School of Education, New York University

Listening and Observing: The Influence of Movies, Radio, and Television—Paul A. Witty, School of Education, Northwestern University

Section Business Meeting

GROUP MEETINGS, 10:50—11:30 A. M.

Group A, Reading

Chairman, Leland B. Jacobs, College of Education, Ohio State University

Resource Consultants:

Anna Marie Evans, Department of Supervision, Cincinnati

Helen Stolte Grayum, University of Washington

Elizabeth Guilfoile, Principal, Twelfth District School, Cincinnati

Theresa K. Kirby, Assistant Superintendent, Hamilton County Public Schools, Ohio

Nellie C. Morrison, Supervisor of Elementary Education, Muncie, Indiana

Ferne Shipley, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Evelyn Wenzel, Indiana State Teachers College, Terre Haute, Indiana

Group B, Writing

Chairman, Helen K. Mackintosh, United States Office of Education, Washington

Resource Consultants:

Alice I. Fulmer, Elementary Supervisor, Tucson, Arizona

Marie M. Hughes, Principal, William Stewart Training School, University of Utah

Daisy M. Jones, Director of Elementary Education, Richmond, Indiana

Lillian C. Paukner, Director of Curriculum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Mabel Rice, Whittier College, Whittier, California

Alice Wabnitz, Teacher, Cincinnati

Lillian Scott Wilson, University School, Bowling Green State University

L. Mary Belle Wright, Teacher, Cincinnati



Group C, Listening and Observing

Chairman, Mildred A. Dawson, State Teachers College, Fredonia, New York

Resource Consultants:

Althea Beery, Supervisor of Primary Grades, Cincinnati

Hortensia Dyer, Elementary Education Department, Columbus, Ohio

Mary Harbage, Director of Elementary Education, Akron, Ohio

Ruth McCafferty, Supervisor of Language Arts, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Margaret G. Mercille, University School, Indiana University

Louise Oakley, Supervisor of Elementary Education, Union City, Tennessee

Laura Zirbes, College of Education, Ohio State University

ANNUAL LUNCHEON, 12:15 P.M.

*Presiding*, Paul Farmer, Atlanta Public Schools; President of the Council

Midway thru' Nash—Ogden Nash, Author, Contributor to the *New Yorker* and the *Saturday Evening Post*

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS IN FIRST GRADE

(Continued from Page 349)

they used. The teachers who introduced supplementary materials after the basic preprimers believed that the change to other materials was especially helpful for the slow-learning group. The teachers who changed after the basic primer believed that the children enjoyed the continuity of characters and profited by repetition of vocabulary. On the other hand, the teachers who changed to supplementary materials about half-way through the First Reader believed that the procedure was too tedious for the slow-learning group with too rapid an introduction of new words especially during the second half of the primer. The two teachers felt that the fast-learning group could continue profitably without change of reading series until the First Reader level but that the plan was harder and more tiresome for the other children. The teachers' opinions of the three procedures stress, accordingly, the necessity of varying the introduction of supplementary materials in terms of the learning ability of the different children.

In the eyes of science, negative results or zero results are as valuable as positive results. With the limited sample of 120 children used in this study there were no achievements in one group reliably superior to the reading achievement in other groups of children. It should be noted that these findings do not favor indiscriminate reading from half a dozen series. No class used more than three series, and these were always in a controlled pattern of introduction. The results may indicate that, under these conditions, one time for introducing supplementary materials into the first grade reading program is as good as another time. They may indicate that many factors other than their use of supplementary readers operate to determine the reading achievement of first and second grade groups of children. The teachers involved in the study believe that differentiation in terms of the learning abilities of the children is important. Each of these hypotheses should be tested further in a more comprehensive study.

## Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Hannah M. Lindahl, Milton Geerdes, Lauretta McCusker, Bernardine G. Schmidt, Leonard S. Kenworthy, Helen C. Baugh, Lillian E. Novotny, Elizabeth Guilfoile, Charlemae Rollins, Hardy R. Finch, and Audrey F. Carpenter. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

### *For the Teacher*

*The Teaching of Spelling.* By James A. Fitzgerald. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co.

*A Basic Life Spelling Vocabulary.* By James A. Fitzgerald. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co.

These two new volumes on the teaching of spelling by an experienced investigator in the field meet a genuine need. The first of these, *The Teaching of Spelling*, aims, according to its Preface, "to present the problems and considerations basic to spelling; to show the importance of fundamental curriculum materials and their relation to method; to designate procedures best adapted to the mastery of spelling by children of varying levels of ability; to offer suggestions for a practical program of testing and reviews; to outline techniques for effective supervision and direction of the spelling program...and to set forth principles and practices for diagnostic and remedial instruction in spelling." In these aims this volume succeeds admirably.

The second volume, *A Basic Life Spelling Vocabulary*, reviews the research essential to word selection, describes a procedure for the selection of spelling words, and presents a basic list of English words derived from studies by McKee and Fitzgerald, Horn, Rinsland, Breed, Dolch, Fitzgerald (the Letter Study), and Brittain. Both volumes are valuable contributions.

*Reading Aids Through The Grades.* Three Hundred Developmental Reading Activities. By David H. Russell and Etta E. Karp. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. Revised and Enlarged Edition. \$1.10.

Modern conceptions of the teaching of reading frequently fail to find expression in daily practice because many teachers are at a loss to know what specific procedures to employ. This little book attempts to overcome this difficulty. The exercises are practical and interesting.

*Writing and Criticism, A Book for Margery Bianco.* Edited by Anne Carroll Moore and Bertha Mahoney Miller. Decorated by Valenti Angelo. The Horn Book, Inc., Boston, 1951.

This distinctive book with its lovely format is a sincere and beautiful testimonial to an author who did much to elevate standards for children's literature. Following a brief biographical introduction by Bertha Mahoney Miller, thoughtful tributes to Margery Bianco as a writer, a mother, and a friend are given by Anne Carroll Moore, Pamela Bianco, and Valenti Angelo. Part Two contains representative selections from the writings of Margery Bianco, three essays, a review, and a child's story. Margery Bianco's admirers will treasure this beautifully prepared publication.

H. M. L.

*The Pronunciation of English.* By Daniel Jones. 3rd edition. Cambridge University Press, \$2.00.

Everything that anyone who is not a professional phonetician needs from Jones is in this little book, entirely revised and enlarged. The dialect of English here treated differs much from any standard of American Speech and no American teacher should ape his

"Received Pronunciation" or consider it superior or attempt to impose it on American students. Nevertheless, one can, for the good of his own understanding, learn more about pronunciation from Jones than from any other book on the English language. Jones knows what he is talking about. He deals with pronunciation and nothing else. His method is systematic and thorough, not distorted for classroom units and exercises. His exposition is clear, very compact but clear in itself, so that one can understand without the aid of a phonetically trained interpreter. He avoids the prescriptive attitude without losing sight of the teacher's obligation to distinguish between the better and the not-so-good. He hews to the line of "RP," yet includes a wealth of comment on other dialects (including American, where his generalizations are not altogether to be trusted).

It should not need to be suggested—and perhaps it does need to be emphatically insisted—that in this country of varied linguistic background every teacher of English, especially in the elementary schools, ought to have an understanding of pronunciation far beyond the routine demands of the curriculum. The bugaboo of phonetic symbols, which frightens many from the only sources of such understanding, is a mere phantom. Anyone can master phonetic symbolization for intelligent reading of a book like this in fifteen minutes.

Lee S. Hultzen

Assoc. Prof. Speech and  
Communication  
Speech Research Laboratory  
University of Illinois

*A Handbook of Literary Terms.* Compiled by H. L. Yelland, S. C. Jones, and K. S. W. Easton. Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th St., New York City.

A convenient reference source for the teacher and advanced student who may wish authoritative and fairly detailed definitions of

such terms as *cablese*, *caesura*, *archaism*, *irony*, *modulation*, *sestina*, and the like.

*An Introduction to Guidance.* By Alice Crow, and Lester D. Crow, American Book.

Guidance is a continuous process that involves the facilitation of individual adjustment in many areas of life. It is not to be narrowly conceived as something which occurs within school boundaries independent from the pupil's activities outside the classroom. "A well-organized school guidance program requires the active participation of administrators, teachers, specialists, and community agencies."

Guidance in this all-inclusive sense is now receiving greater emphasis at all levels of education. The book is directed primarily to teachers and adults who wish to aid people of all ages and school grades to make satisfactory life adjustments.

M. G.

### For Early Adolescents

*Irish Red; Son of Big Red.* By Jim Kjelgaard. Holiday House, \$2.50.

A fitting sequel to *Big Red*, and yet a story that has an individuality of its own. Mike, the stubborn "mutton head" pup, who was the runt of the litter, finally develops into a champion. It's told with humor, and has adventure and drama enough to hold the interest of both boys and girls. Kjelgaard also rewards the reader with a fine picture of the wilderness and of young Danny Pickett. There are no illustrations, but they aren't needed. Recommended.

L. McC.

*The Story of Toscanini.* By David Ewen. Henry Holt, \$2.50.

This little volume is biography at its best. In 116 pages David Ewen, music critic, records the journey of Toscanini to greatness and it is a thrilling story told in a simple, graphic, and sometimes moving style.

*The Story of Toscanini* is the biography of a many-sided man. There is the story of Toscanini the genius, with his incredible memory,

his passion for perfection, his incomparable talent in conducting. There is the story of Toscanini the tyrant, attacking his orchestra members and battling his audiences. There is the story of Toscanini the apostle of freedom and his fights with fascists in Italy and Germany. Finally, there is the story of "the other Toscanini," at ease with his fellow musicians on their many tours or at home in Riverdale, New York.

Good readers in the upper elementary grades should enjoy this excellent volume. Music lovers old and young will revel in this recording of the life of the world's greatest contemporary conductor. Teachers will be especially proud of their colleague, Signora Vernoni, the second-grade teacher who "discovered" Toscanini's musical talent and persuaded his family and others to provide him with an adequate musical education.

L. S. K.

*Time Out for Youth.* By Arthur S. Gregor. Macmillan, \$3.00.

Directed at young people in an effort to help them adjust happily to life, this book does not attempt to give formulas for solving problems, but rather presents two sides to every question. Typical family incidents have been discussed, such as managing an allowance, what to do about brothers and sisters, family councils, making conversation while waiting for the girl friend to come down stairs, how to ask for a date, arranging a study hour at home. The parents' viewpoint is often stressed, and suggestions made to youngsters as to how to meet it, and tactfully make concessions or change it as the case may be.

If schools have planned discussions built around teen-age problems this book contains wonderful material. At the end of each chapter are several questions that might naturally arise in such groups, and which have no one answer or solution. They are the topics talked over with cokes at the drug store, timely and uni-

versal. The handling in this book is practical and based on a fine philosophy—"Youth is not a waiting period for the time when you become an adult, but a time that should be lived and appreciated for its own sake."

A. F. C.

*Senior Days at Davenport High.* By Charles E. Davis. Illustrated by Anne Fleur. Julian Messner, \$2.50.

Searching for a way of celebrating a football victory, Don and his friends go for a ride and have an accident. One boy's back is broken and Don starts for help, not knowing that he has a concussion. On the way he "blacks out" and does not reappear at the scene of the accident. Because of this he is branded as a coward and yellow, and is completely ostracized by his friends and the school body, except for one Negro boy. Anonymously giving blood, he saves the life of the boy who was hurt, but no one knows he has done it. After a year, the coach investigates the situation and finds Don is still suffering from results of the concussion. In a dramatic, but highly improbable assembly, the boy's name is cleared and his honor restored. Don plans an all-night party after the prom so that there will be no more accidents, and all ends happily.

Written by a superintendent of schools with a commendable aim, namely to show how youngsters can have fun at home after a party without riding the highways, this story is not convincing. Just too, too much happens to the unfortunate boy. The incidents lack freshness, and the whole thing is too preachy. It is intended for teen-agers, and is laid in highschool.

A. F. C.

*Americans Before Columbus.* By Elizabeth Chesley Baily. Illustrated by C. B. Falls and from photographs. Viking Press, \$4.00.

A colorful and accurate panorama of the Indians of North and South America before 1492. It serves also as a revealing story of archaeology and its contribution to our knowl-



edge of the past. Mrs. Baity's readable style weaves fact, legend, and interpretation into this history of the great civilizations of the Aztecs, Mayas and Incas and of the Pueblo, Iroquois and other Indians of the North. The illustrations and maps are excellent. Highly recommended as enrichment material for art or history, and as a fascinating story for any reader. This book was awarded the *Herald Tribune* Award for the best book published in the spring of 1951 for older boys and girls.

L. McC.

*Gee Whillikins.* By Adda Mai Sharp. Illustrated by Elizabeth Rice. The Steck Company, \$1.50.

A boy and his horse form the duo for this tale for the middle-grade boy. The story of Bryce and Gee Whillikins—so-named because that was all Bryce could say in his surprise at the horse's whinny—is the tale of a spring and summer at a Texas ranch. From the first excitement of a wild horse stampede through the capture and training of Gee, the prairie fire, and the new B-G ranch, every moment of thrill will be enjoyed by its readers.

B. G. S.

*The Picture Story of Alaska.* By Hester O'Neill. Illustrated by Ursula Koering. David McKay, \$2.50.

Alaska is in the news these days. One reason is because of its strategic importance geographically and militarily. Another is because of its request for admission as a state. Consequently teachers need material on our most northern outpost.

This book should prove helpful to teachers and to some good readers in grades 6 to 8, especially as a reference book. It is packed with information and has colorful border designs. However, its difficult vocabulary and long sentences make it unsuitable for many boys and girls. Similarly, the amount of material on each page and the lack of frequent bold-faced captions detract from its value. The publishers could perform a great service in this series

by more attention to these essentials for good books.

L. S. K.

*Passage to America: The Story of the Great Migrations.* By Katherine B. Shippen. Harper, \$2.50.

Readers familiar with Katherine B. Shippen's previous books may be disappointed in this volume. It opens with a chapter devoted to man on the move, jumps to scenes at the end of our Revolution, and then discusses in more detail various immigrant groups, particularly those of the 19th century. It gives some background on the reasons for migration to the United States, but almost nothing on the contribution of these groups to our national life.

Factually it could also be improved. For example, it refers to *the* language which Negroes from Africa spoke, rather than the several languages; speaks of Gunnar Myrdal as a Dane rather than a Swede; and reinforces stereotypes such as her statements that "Most Germans are very good managers" and "...no man, and particularly no German, will leave the soil that has been cultivated by his people for many generations...unless he knows something about the place he is going to."

The book can best be used by teachers for short, interesting accounts of 19th century migrations which could be read to pupils, and by more mature upper elementary school children as a reference volume. But there are better books than this one on immigration.

L. S. K.

*City Neighbor.* By Clara Ingram Judson. The Story of Jane Addams. Scribner's, \$2.50.

This is a story well worth telling and it is well told. With the same skill which characterized her books on Robert Fulton, William Gorgas, and George Stephenson, the author sketches in fiction from the life of one of the world's greatest women. It is the story of "The Gray Brick House" in Cedarville, Illinois, where Jane Addams lived as a girl, of her "College Days," of "The Search" for vocation, and of

"Hull House A Magnet" for recent immigrants in Chicago.

Upper elementary and junior high school pupils should enjoy the book immensely and identify themselves with Jane Addams in many situations. Teachers might profitably read parts of the book to younger children as examples of "a good neighbor."

The book compares very favorably with the volumes by Jean Wagoner and by Winifred Wise on *Jane Addams: Little Lame Girl* and *Jane Addams of Hull House*. L. S. K.

*Smeller Martin*. Written and illustrated by Robert Lawson. Viking, \$2.50.

Twelve-year-old Davey Martin is nicknamed "Smeller" by friends because of his extraordinary sense of smell. The story deals with one summer at home with the local preacher, Reverend Beasley; a retired Latin professor, Mr. Benton, (both of whom are vying for Aunt Agatha's hand), the colored hired hand, and the disreputable Carter family. Theft, arson, insanity, murder, and a mob scene are all involved, as well as Davey's "smeller", in the evaluation of the plot. Some of the characterizations are in very bad taste as are some expressions used. The illustrations are superior, of course.

H. C. B.

*More Experiments in Science*. By Nelson F. Beeler and Franklyn M. Branley. Thomas Y. Crowell, \$2.50.

By following the chemical formula in this book and planting a few seeds in gravel and peat moss, in a flower pot, a boy may raise vegetables without soil and gain some insight into the exciting science of supersonics. He may learn, too, in the related reading that American soldiers ate fresh lettuce, tomatoes and other vegetables from their tank gardens on the coral islands of the South Pacific. A girl may learn to produce dainty and interesting prints by collecting the spores of mushrooms on paper coated with an ordinary fixative, such as the white of egg. These and many more experi-

ments are so clearly presented that boys and girls of Junior High School age can work them out as personal hobbies. Elementary pupils can follow many of the suggestions in a group with a little teacher guidance. Parents will find the volume a source of good fun in the home. Club leaders and craft instructors can use many of the ideas. Previous books, entitled, *Experiments in Science* and *Experiments with Electricity* have been written by this team of authors who take as their motto—"Try it and see for yourself."

E. G.

*Joe Panther*. By Zachary Ball. Holiday House, \$2.50.

Joe Panther is a Seminole Indian boy whose burning ambition is to work on one of the luxurious deep sea fishing boats that operate off the coast of Florida. In order to qualify for the job he must capture a 10-foot alligator alive.

He goes into the deep Everglades with only his dog and captures an 11-foot alligator, lands the job in spite of the obvious hatred and opposition of the Captain's first mate. On the job, he saves the life of a woman passenger, later rescues a drowning child, and during a fierce hurricane he uncovers a smuggling plot which involves the mate.

Doubtless some older boys will enjoy the fast-paced plot and the many hair-breadth escapes but the discerning reader will be able to see that too much of the story hangs on the thin thread of coincidence. At times the author's ideas of Indian-white relationships intrude, making the story somewhat "preachy."

C. R.

### For the Middle Grades

*Lightfoot*. By Katherine B. Shippen. Illustrated by Tom Two-Arrows. Viking, \$2.00.

The first fourteen years in the life of an Iroquois boy during the time of the great League of the Iroquois. The early customs, history, festivals, as well as many legends are woven into the story which culminates in Lightfoot's great fast which makes him a man. A refreshing contrast to the many books on In-

dians which deal chiefly with their conflicts with the white man. A wholesome presentation of historical Iroquois family life. Illustrated by a present day Iroquois, Tom Two-Arrows.

H. C. B.

*Little Long Rifle.* By Edd Winfield Parks. Illustrated by Bob Meyers. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

After giving Bob a rifle built to his size for his twelfth birthday, Major Winchester hired Indian Pete to teach the boy how to use it skillfully, how to walk quietly through the woods, to shoot squirrels through the eye, to read animal signs in the forest, and become a real woodsman. Bob learned his lessons so well he was able to track the Indian horse thieves and overhear their plans. Using his head and own ingenuity he figured out how to outwit the men and save his father's horses.

I have used this book with intermediate grade boys, and with slow readers in junior high. It never fails to hold their interest and give them pleasure. Although laid in Tennessee in 1801, Bob's desire to own a rifle is still reflected in boys today, who consider its 139 pages to be good adventure.

A. F. C.

*Eagle in the Valley.* By Frances Kohan and Truda Weil. Illustrated by Katherine Evans. Children's Press, \$2.50.

This book is an illustration of what happens when authors have information to put over by means of a story. The climate, customs, history and modern life of Mexico are accurately presented through a frail plot that takes a Mexican Indian boy from his native home to life in Mexico City where he sees inventions and luxuries he never dreamed existed. There is little to hold the reader's attention if he is not looking for information. Conversations read like paragraphs in a geography book, and situations are contrived to bring out some fact.

The print is unusually large, and the paper of exceptional quality. The appealing illustra-

tions have a soft charcoal effect that is good and in them Mexican life is attractively caught. The reading level is intermediate grades.

A. F. C.

*Worlds in the Sky.* By Carroll Lane Fenton and Mildred Adams Fenton. John Day.

The Fentons have had much experience with writing for boys and girls in the field of natural science. This volume deals clearly and delightfully with the difficult concepts involved in the earth's relations with all the other bodies of the universe.

The simplified print, in dark blue on white paper, matches the illustrations, all done in blue and white, instead of the proverbial black and white. The authors have done their own illustrating.

Children of 10 to 12 will find the chapters interesting reading, particularly if drawn to it out of some interest in astronomy developed in school or at home. It would be a delightful gift to a child, after a visit to an observatory. But if no such facilities are available, parents may find it a help in answering some of the questions that children ask when they look up at the vast, illimitable reaches of the sky.

E. G.

*A Treasure Chest of Sport Stories.* Compiled by Max Herzberg. Julian Messner, \$2.75.

There is more to this book than just a collection of good sport yarns, nineteen of them on ten different sports. It is a gallery of characters, humorous, pathetic, gallant, unbelievable. Through the fast moving plots come the bright colors of the personalities involved, and the human element is always the most important. Such names as Damon Runyan, John Taintor Foote, John R. Tunis in the table of contents assure the reader of good writing. The stories are reprints, and most of them from an adult market, but young people will enjoy them as much.

A. F. C.

*House With Red Sails.* By Leone Adelson. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. David McKay, \$2.50.

Life for a modern American family who make their home on a red-sailed Chinese junk provide a full story of the Norstrom family. They made their way by the small admission charged of the curious when they docked, but the time came when the curious grew fewer and fewer, and the silver quarters admission less and less. Only then does Captain Norstrom compromise by mooring the junk, and letting the family lead a "normal" life. B. G. S.

*Creative Carpentry.* By Constance Crocker. Houghton, Mifflin, \$2.00.

Even the art department will approve of this one—it shows the way to build certain types of furniture and other objects and leaves the decision as to size and decoration to the builder. Occasionally it is difficult to follow the directions. The amateur will have to start with the objects at the beginning of the book and learn the techniques of building. The suggestions for "Building for a girl's room"—a boy's room, mother, father, camp etc. are excellent.

L. McC.

*House in Robin Lane.* By Virginia Frances Voight. Illustrated by Jean Martinez. Holliday House, \$2.50.

A demure, but fun-spangled tale of little Jennifer, who loved everyone and wanted badly to be loved in return, is this tale planned for the middle-grades reader. A little of the Cinderella story is told against a real-life background of stage-coach days, with hardship, adventure, and even a circus hobnobbing easily with Whig politics and Yankee peddlers. It's a whimsical tale, with touches of a gay light-heartedness that characterized little Jennifer, even when she tried so hard to "be a lady."

B. G. S.

*Milk for You.* By G. Warren Schloat, Jr. Scribner's, \$2.00.

At least two types of books are needed for use in elementary schools on the topic of milk. One is a picture book for boys and girls in the primary grades, with many large pictures and a

few captions in simple vocabulary. The other is a book for pupils in the intermediate grades, with many pictures and a simple explanation of scientific facts.

Unfortunately, this book falls in between the two. The illustrations feature a small boy but the text is written in terms which are difficult even for 5th and 6th grade boys and girls, who will not identify themselves with this young lad. Pictures and diagrams are jumbled in several parts of the book, to the confusion of the reader. There is no explanation of the many new terms used.

For want of really good books on milk, this may be used, but there is much room for writers on this topic who know something about children, milk, and the layout of children's books.

L. S. K.

### *For Younger Children*

*The Adventures of Pinocchio.* By C. Collodi. Illustrated by Attilio Mussino. Macmillan, \$2.00.

Another Pinocchio? Why not, when the illustrations are the charming and familiar Pinocchio made famous by the Italian artist, Attilio Mussino. How children love naughty, conceited, foolish, boastful Pinocchio who bobs up so nonchalantly after each sad misadventure and finally becomes, in spite of his folly, a good, generous, manly, real boy! Carol Della Chiesa's translation of Lorenzini's classic will be welcomed for its simplicity and clarity. H. M. L.

*A Child's Life of Jesus.* By Fulton Oursler. Illustrated by Elinore Blaisdell. Franklin Watts, \$1.75.

This is Mr. Oursler's first book for children, but in it he has truly reached his very young, who will listen to his story read to them long before they are of reading age themselves. The pictures are soft and childlike, but reverent in detail and coloring. The primary child can read it easily, and those from four to six can readily understand its vocabulary and language structure. B. G. S.



*The Fig Tree.* By Eleanor Frances Lattimore.

Illustrated by the author. Morrow, \$2.00.

The old, old fig tree harbored generations of secrets, but none more fascinating to the young reader than the very tiny gold key lying deep in the hollow at its very top. How Sarah Melanie—who liked to be called Sally—found it and the treasure it opened is a story for 6 to 10 year olds—particularly for those who are in that in-between stage from tomboy to sweet little girls.

B. G. S.

*Hello Judy Stories.* By Charlotte Becker. Illustrated in color by the author. Scribner's \$2.00.

Three Judy stories in one — Hello Judy, Judy's Farm Visit, and Happy Birthday, Judy — are delightfully illustrated by the author in color and should be interesting to youngsters at the primary level because they tell of experiences that are familiar to most of them.

L. E. N.

*Nils, the Island Boy.* Written and illustrated by Hedvig Collin. Viking, \$2.00.

This is a delightful book for children. It is the story of a modern nine year old Danish boy and his pony, Spotted Tail. It is also the story of a Danish boy and his family—the mother who acts as clown in his circus, the father who takes him fishing, and the baby sister. It is likewise the story of the boy's trip to the United States on the Gripsholm and the "log" he kept of his friends on board.

The language is simple, the incidents life-like, and the pencil sketches charming. The book is not cluttered up with factual information on Denmark; the author's purpose was to present a small Danish boy, not the geography or history of Denmark.

Boys and girls in the primary grades would enjoy *bearing* this story; children from the 4th

grade up would enjoy *reading* it. Almost any child could identify himself quickly with Nils. This is the type of book on children of other countries which we need so much. It should be warmly welcomed.

L. S. K.

*Cow Concert.* By Earle Goodenow. Illustrated by the author. Knopf, \$1.50.

A gayly illustrated story of Marie-Louise, who teaches her father's cows to make music with their bells. Fat Annette, the cow that loves to eat, provides most of the amusement in the tale. She almost makes Marie-Louise lose the bell-ringing contest, but redeems herself in time. The Swiss setting adds interest. Children may miss the humor in the incongruity of cows playing the Strauss waltzes, but there is enough to this intriguing story to delight them.

L. McC.

*Pawnee.* By Thelma Harrington Bell. Illustrated by Corydon Bell. Viking, \$2.00.

This is a very unusual story of Pawnee, a buckskin brave, only eight inches tall. The adult Spencers looked upon him as a doll, but to his young owner, Bobby Spencer, Pawnee was alive and adventurous. He gets into trouble in the Spencer household for shooting bows and arrows, building campfires and smoking pipes—all of which Bobby is blamed for, and eventually Pawnee is ousted. The climax of the story comes when Pawnee rides to glory on a horse member of the Indian group with the show. in a wild west show and becomes a permanent

For children six to nine whose dolls or other toys seem very much alive the whimsy in *Pawnee* will have great appeal. It doesn't quite hold together at the point where Pawnee is ousted from the Spencer household. One would expect a young child to show greater concern for so beloved and constant a companion as Pawnee was for Bobby.

C. B. S.

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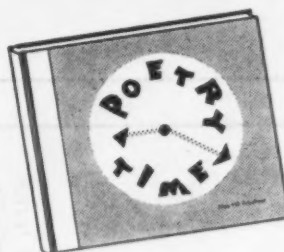


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